

4.0 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendments

This chapter discusses federal agency land use plan amendments associated with the Project alternatives proposed in Chapter 2.0 and residual impacts from the Project-specific impact analysis in Chapter 3.0.

The approximately 725-mile TransWest transmission line between Rawlins, Wyoming, and Las Vegas, Nevada, crosses four states, including public lands administered by 14 BLM FOs and 5 national forests. In areas where mitigation or avoidance could not be applied as determined through the Project-specific impact analysis discussed in Chapter 3.0, some aspects of the Project would not conform to or be consistent with portions of the administering federal agency's land use plan. In addition, because of the large-scale nature of the Project and other RFFAs for transmission projects proposed in similar areas, administering agencies have determined that plan amendments to establish new utility corridors should be evaluated in some areas to inform lead agency decision-making on current and future projects.

Both the BLM and USFS land use planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.5 and 36 CFR 219.15) require that project-specific decisions, including authorized uses of land, conform to or be consistent with the applicable plan. If a proposed project-specific decision is not consistent with or conform to the applicable plan, the responsible official may modify the proposed decision to make it conform or be consistent with the plan, reject the proposal, or amend the plan such that the action will conform or be consistent with the plan as amended. As a result, amendments of multiple USFS LRMPs and BLM RMPs may be necessary before the Project could proceed, if approved. Plan amendments also may be needed for proposed or alternative routes that cross the Dinosaur National Monument or Lake Mead NRA and associated NPS decisions may involve a separate NEPA review.

The BLM and USFS plan amendments are subject to public review and procedures outlined in federal regulations (43 CFR 1610.2 and 36 CFR 219.16). Pursuant to these regulations, outreach activities (see Chapter 6.0) were conducted to gather public input on the Project and proposed amendments, planning criteria were developed and circulated for use in evaluating the amendments, and an analysis of the plan amendments was incorporated into this EIS. The BLM plan amendment procedures also call for an extended 90-day public review period/objection period of plan amendments issued concurrently with release of the Draft EIS. The BLM's regulations in 43 CFR 1610.3-2 require a concurrent 30-day public protest period and 60-day Governor's Consistency Review of the plan amendments with release of the Final EIS. For the USFS, when a plan amendment that is approved in a decision document approving a project or activity and that applies only to one specific project or activity, the administrative review process for the project or activity applies. In this case, the administrative review process would be the objection process at 36 CFR Part 218.

For the Project, each potential situation of non-conformance or inconsistency by proposed and alternative routes as well as associated Project components is identified through a comparison to the respective land use plan. A plan amendment that would allow authorization of the proposed or alternative route is presented as the preferred plan amendment for that situation. Land use planning regulations require that the Draft EIS identify the "agency preferred alternative," or those plan amendments that best meet multiple use and sustained yield mandates of FLPMA and the NFMA. The Final EIS identifies the "proposed amendments," or the amendments that the BLM and USFS proposes to implement for the selected alternative. Plan amendments would only be implemented for any project routes that are finally authorized. The plan amendments were identified in the Draft EIS because proposed BLM land use plan decisions (i.e., plan amendments) are subject to a 90-day Draft EIS public comment period and may be protested or subject to an objection process during the Final EIS phase of the NEPA process, as opposed to implementation decisions (i.e., approving a ROW

grant), which may have a 45-day Draft EIS public comment period and may be subject to appeal at the ROD phase of the NEPA process. For the USFS, under 36 CFR 219.16(b), when a plan amendment is approved in a decision document approving a project or activity and the amendment applies only to the project or activity, the notification requirements for the project or activity applies. The required 45-day opportunity for comment on the Draft EIS was provided. Comments received on the plan amendments during the Draft EIS comment period were considered and adjustment have been made as appropriate in this Final EIS (see **Appendix L**, Draft EIS Response to Comments).

The following sections describe the proposed BLM and USFS plan amendments required under each alternative and Project component, followed by an analysis of the environmental impacts and planning implications associated with adoption of these amendments. A discussion of the federal agencies affected is provided in Section 1.4.2 in Chapter 1.0 and associated BLM and USFS plans are listed in **Table 1-3** (BLM plans) and **Table 1-4** (USFS plans). The project purpose and need, alternatives, affected environment, and Project-specific impact analysis are discussed in the previous EIS chapters (1.0 through 3.0). Cumulative impacts are addressed in Chapter 5.0.

4.1 Land Use Plan Amendment Process

4.1.1 Bureau of Land Management Planning

The BLM prepares RMPs for public lands and federal minerals in accordance with FLPMA and the regulations in 43 CFR 1600. The BLM Handbook H-1601-1 *Land Use Planning Handbook* provides specific guidance for preparing, amending, revising, maintaining, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating BLM land use plans. According to the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1), “plan amendments (see 43 CFR 1610.5-5) change one or more of the terms, conditions, or decisions of an approved land use plan” and “are most often prompted by the need to: (1) Consider a proposal or action that does not conform to the plan.” The BLM’s land use planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-5 state, “An amendment shall be initiated by the need to consider monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy, a change in circumstances or a proposed action that may result in a change in the scope of resource uses or a change in the terms, conditions and decisions of the approved plan.” Plans needing amendment may be grouped geographically or by type of decision in the same amendment process. Similarly, one amendment process may amend the same or related decisions in more than one land use plan. The amendment process also may be used to update plans adopted from another agency (H-1601-1).

4.1.2 U.S. Forest Service Planning

The USFS prepares LRMPs in accordance with NFMA and the regulations in 36 CFR 219. Under 36 CFR 219.17(b)(3), the completion and approval of the plan amendments associated with this Project are in conformance with the provisions of the prior planning regulation, including the transition provisions of the reinstated 2000 rule (36 CFR part 299, published at 36 CFR parts 200 to 299, revised as of July 1, 2010). The transition provisions allow the use of the 1982 planning procedures (see CFR parts 200 to 299, Revised as of July 1, 2000). The 1982 procedures require appropriate public notification and satisfactory completion of NEPA procedures. Under 36 CFR 219.16(b), the public notification requirement was a 45-day opportunity for comment on the Draft EIS, which was provided, and applicable NEPA procedures have been followed. Under 36 CFR 219.17(b)(3), for amendments associated with this Project, the administrative review procedures in 36 CFR 219 Subpart B must be followed. Those procedures, at 36 CFR 219.59(b) require that for a plan amendment that is approved in a decision document approving a project or activity and applies only to the project or activity, the administrative review procedure process for the Project, 36 CFR 218, applies.

4.2 Planning Area Boundaries

The planning area boundaries are limited to the area needed to bring the proposed or alternative routes into conformance or be consistent with the agency plan. The planning area boundaries include

the refined transmission line corridor, terminal areas, ground electrode areas, areas where some temporary construction facilities and temporary and permanent access roads may be located (which may extend up to 1 mile beyond the refined transmission line corridor), or a larger area as defined by the land management agency (shown in **Figures 2-1** through **2-4** in Chapter 2.0).

4.3 Planning Issues and Criteria

The NOI to prepare an EIS and associated plan amendments for the Project was published in the *Federal Register* on January 4, 2011, and initiated a 90-day public scoping period. The BLM and Western held 23 public scoping meetings at various locations in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Nevada (see Section 1.7 and **Table 1-5** in Chapter 1.0 for a list of meetings). The planning issues identified in the NOI and through scoping are discussed in Section 4.3.1. General planning criteria were developed based on these issues in relation to areas of non-conformance and are included in Section 4.3.2.

4.3.1 Planning Issues

According to 43 CFR 1610.4-1, “at the outset of the planning process, the public, other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Indian tribes shall be given an opportunity to suggest concerns, needs, and resource use, development, and protection opportunities for consideration in analyzing project impacts and identifying potential plan amendments.” The federal land manager, in collaboration with any cooperating agencies, analyzed those suggestions and other available data, such as records of resource conditions, trends, needs, problems, and select topics to determine the issues to be addressed during the planning process. Issues were modified during the planning process to incorporate new information. The identification of issues also complies with the scoping process required by regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1501.7).

The following issues were identified by the BLM and USFS, other agencies, cooperators, and individuals in the January 2011 NOI:

- Socioeconomic impacts;
- Public health and safety;
- Plant and animal species (including special and sensitive status species, desert tortoise and sage-grouse);
- Cultural resources and historic sites;
- Visual intrusions;
- Lands with wilderness characteristics;
- National scenic and historic trails;
- Wild and scenic rivers; and
- IRAs on national forests.

BLM and USFS invited the public, other federal agencies, and state, local, and Tribal governments to identify additional concerns or issues during scoping meetings and the public comment period that followed. The following nine key topics were identified through public scoping as discussed in Section 1.8:

- Corridor locations;
- Potential private and public land use conflicts;
- Impacts to fish, wildlife, vegetation, special status species, and habitat;

- Public health and safety;
- Impacts to areas with special management designations;
- Cumulative impacts;
- Socioeconomic impacts (property values and tax base);
- Concerns about wildlife mitigation; and
- Noxious weed control and reclamation.

4.3.2 Planning Criteria

Planning criteria guide development of the plan amendment by helping define the decision space (or the “sideboards” that define the scope of the planning effort); they are based upon applicable laws, Director and State Director guidance, and the results of public and governmental participation (43 CFR 1610.4-2). The planning criteria serve the following purposes:

- To ensure that the planning effort is focused on the issues, follows and incorporates legal requirements, addresses management of all land resources and land uses in the planning area, and that preparation is accomplished efficiently;
- To identify the scope and parameters of the planning effort for the decision-maker, the interdisciplinary team and the public; and
- Inform the public of what should and should not be expected from the plan amendment effort. This includes identification of any planning issues that are not ready for decision-making and that will be addressed only through subsequent activity or implementation planning efforts or in approving public land and resource use authorizations (e.g., processing applications for ROWs).

The following general planning criteria were developed for the proposed plan amendments to help focus the preparation of planning and management alternatives and the analysis of impacts and to guide selection of the agency preferred alternative.

- This planning effort will recognize valid existing rights.
- Actions must comply with laws, executive orders, regulations, and policy.
- Lands covered by the planning effort include any/all lands that may affect, or be affected by, the management occurring on lands in the planning area. However, the plan amendment will apply only to the BLM- and USFS-administered lands in the planning area. Within the planning area, management decisions will not apply to non-public land surface or mineral estate, on public lands administered by other federal agencies, or the federal mineral estate underlying public lands administered by other federal agencies.
- A collaborative and multi-jurisdictional approach will be used, where possible, to jointly determine the desired future condition and management direction for the public lands.
- To the extent possible, and within legal and regulatory parameters, management and plan amendment decisions will be consistent with officially approved or adopted resource related plans, and the policies and programs contained therein, of other federal agencies, state and local governments and Indian tribes, so long as the guidance and resource management plans also are consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of federal laws and regulations applicable to federal lands, including federal and state pollution control laws as implemented by applicable federal and state air, water, noise, and other pollution standards or implementation plans.
- Planning and management direction will be focused on the relative values of resources and not the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or economic output.

- Where practicable and timely for the plan amendment, current scientific information, research, and new technologies will be considered.
- Existing endangered species recovery plans, including plans for reintroduction of endangered species and other species, will be considered. Consultation, coordination and cooperation with the USFWS will be in accordance with Interagency MOUs regarding Section 7 Consultation. Applicable biological opinions regarding areas within the planning area will be considered.
- Standard Mitigation Guidelines for surface disturbing and disruptive activities will be applied to the analysis and approval of subsequent activities.

The following planning criteria will be used to guide the selection of the plan amendment:

- Levels of land use restrictions or mitigation needed to protect resources and keep lands and resources available for public use;
- Manageability of plan amendment decisions with consideration of jurisdiction, management goals for other resources present, and resource uses in the planning area;
- The potential for the occurrence of mineral and energy resources;
- Consistency and conformance with the land use plans, programs, and policies of other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Indian tribes;
- The potential for sustaining the productivity and diversity of ecosystems while providing for human values, products, and services;
- Social and economic values;
- Existing law, regulations, and policy;
- Public welfare and safety; and
- Environmental impacts.

4.4 Proposed Land Use Plan Amendments

Affected federal land managers were contacted in May and June 2011 with follow-up discussions in March 2012 to gather data on whether plan amendments were needed when crossing their jurisdiction. Follow-up with federal land managers occurred in early 2014 to determine whether any updates are needed based on the refined transmission line corridors as well as public comments received on the Draft EIS (see **Appendix L**, Draft EIS Response to Comments). Based on those discussions and conformance considerations resulting from the Project impact analysis in Chapter 3.0, areas of potential non-conformance or inconsistency were identified as follows:

- Areas with utility-corridor-only placement restrictions, corridors with underground only restrictions, ROW exclusion areas, or ROW avoidance areas with unavoidable resource conflicts;
- Changes to utility corridors may be required depending on the language and management direction outlined in each land use plan;
- Areas crossing Special Designations or Management Areas (SD/MAs), such as NHTs, ACECs, natural areas, or WSRs, that have ROW corridor restrictions or unavoidable resource conflicts;
- Lack of compliance with resource objectives, stipulations, standards, and guidelines that cannot be avoided or mitigated, which could include areas that encroach on buffers to protect raptors, cultural resources, special status species, water sources, and areas that conflict with recreation or visual quality objectives; and,

- Agency-identified need to amend a plan to expand an existing utility corridor or create a new utility corridor because of the large-scale nature of the Project and other RFFA transmission projects proposed in similar areas.

Table 4-1 describes the type of non-conformance issue in each affected jurisdiction by alternative that necessitates a plan amendment for the various BLM FOs and national forests. **Table 4-1** also lists routing issues that were considered, but did not require a plan amendment. Maps depicting the required plan amendments are included in **Figures 4-1** through **4-19**.

In general, the federal land managers designate utility corridors with the objectives of providing space for infrastructure projects, while minimizing the proliferation of dispersed ROWs across federal lands and the associated environmental impacts. Designation of utility corridors in a land use plan indicates the preferred location for linear ROWs (such as those needed for transmission lines, pipelines and other infrastructure projects) in a particular resource area. Most utility corridors are designated based on the best information available from utilities and government agencies at the time of the plan revision. Many utility corridors have been designated based on the location and type of existing facilities present. However, some of the corridors were never used due to changes in the economy or a variety of other reasons. Other projects were approved outside of designated corridors. Thus, while utility corridors reflect the agency's best efforts to predict future needs, they do occasionally need to be re-evaluated and updated.

Designation of a utility corridor does not mean that future ROWs are necessarily restricted to corridors, nor is it a commitment by the federal land manager to approve all ROW applications within corridors. If the Project and plan amendments are approved, subsequent projects seeking to locate in existing or newly created utility corridors would still be required to undergo additional environmental review pursuant to NEPA. The average number of transmission lines that are placed together in the same corridor is usually two to four lines, depending on the width of the corridor. However, the corridor could contain other linear facilities, such as pipelines or fiber-optic cables. The ultimate capacity of the corridor for additional facilities would be determined by the federal land manager through review of future NEPA documents, as well as ongoing land use monitoring and management activities.

While the amendments for new utility corridors designate a corridor that encompasses the Project alignments, the width of the corridor has been narrowed or widened in places at the federal land manager's discretion. Further refinements to the corridor may occur in the future. This may be necessary and appropriate, for example, as a way to avoid disturbing sensitive resources in a particular area or limiting the amount of additional ROWs through a sensitive area. The designated width is considered a general guideline; however, the federal land manager can require proposed utilities to reduce spacing to the extent feasible or avoid sensitive resources within a corridor. This flexibility is desirable as it allows the federal land manager to locate future ROWs and facilities to avoid sensitive resources or other developments.

A description of the non-conformance issues or management plan inconsistencies and whether a plan amendment would be needed are described in the following sections.

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations¹

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Area of Resource Conflict or Amendment Consideration	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative G	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
BLM	Rawlins FO	Wyoming	ROD and Approved Rawlins RMP (Dec 2008)	A, B, C, D	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	X	X	--	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	X ⁵ -raptors, cultural, visual	X ⁵ -raptors, cultural, visual	X ⁵ -raptors, cultural, water, visual	X ⁵ -raptors, cultural, visual	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BLM	Little Snake FO	Colorado	Little Snake ROD and Approved RMP (Oct 2011)	A, B, C, D , and Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	X	X	--	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	X ⁵ -raptors, SSS wildlife, water, visual	X ⁵ -raptors, SSS wildlife, water, visual	X ⁵ -raptors, SSS wildlife, visual	X ⁵ -raptors, SSS wildlife, water, visual	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BLM	White River FO	Colorado	White River ROD and Approved RMP (Jul 1997)	B, C	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	--	X	X	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	X-raptors ⁶	X-visual ^{4,5} , water, raptors	X-visual ^{4,5} , water, raptors	X-raptors ⁶	X-raptors ⁶	X-raptors ⁶	X-raptors ⁶	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	X	X	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
BLM	Grand Junction FO	Colorado	Grand Junction Resource Area RMP and ROD (Jan 1987)	None ⁶	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	N/A	X ⁶ -SMAs, wildlife, visual ⁵	X ⁶ -SMAs, wildlife, visual ⁵	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations¹

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Area of Resource Conflict or Amendment Consideration	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative G	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
					Accommodate RFFA Projects									
BLM	Vernal FO	Utah	Vernal FO ROD and Approved RMP (Oct 2008)	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A	X
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	X-SSS wildlife, water, visual ⁵	X-SSS wildlife, water	X-SSS wildlife, water	X-SSS wildlife, raptors, water, SMAs, visual ⁵	X-SSS wildlife, water, visual ⁵	X-SSS wildlife, raptors, water, SMAs, visual ⁵	X-SSS wildlife, water, visual ⁵	N/A	X- visual ⁴
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	--	--	--	X	--	N/A	--
BLM	Moab FO	Utah	Moab FO ROD and Approved RMP (Oct 2008)	None ⁶	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	N/A	X ⁶ -cultural, minerals, SSS wildlife, water, visual ⁵	X ⁶ -cultural, minerals, SSS wildlife, water, visual ⁵	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BLM	Price FO	Utah	Price FO ROD and Approved RMP (Oct 2008)	B, C, D, Price and Castle Dale Alternative Connectors	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	N/A	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	N/A	X-cultural, water, SSS wildlife	X-SMAs, cultural, water, SSS wildlife, visual ⁵	X-water	N/A	N/A	N/A	X-water	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	N/A	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations¹

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Area of Resource Conflict or Amendment Consideration	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative G	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
BLM	Salt Lake FO	Utah	ROD for the Pony Express RMP and Rangeland Program Summary for Utah County (Jan 1990); amendment to RMP, November, 1997	A, E, F, G, Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	X	--	N/A	X
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--		N/A	--
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	X	X	N/A	X
BLM	Richfield FO	Utah	Richfield ROD and Approved RMP (Oct 2008)	None ⁶	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	--	X ⁶ -water	X ⁶ -water	X ⁶ -water	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
BLM	Fillmore FO	Utah	Warm Springs Resource Area RMP and ROD (Apr 1987) House Range Resource Area RMP and ROD (Oct 1987)	None ⁶	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	X-visual ⁵	--	--	X-visual ⁵	X-visual ⁵	X-visual ⁵	X-visual ⁵	--	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	N/A
BLM	Cedar City FO	Utah	Pinyon Management Framework Plan (Jun 1983); amendment to MFP, 1997 Cedar Beaver Garfield Antimony ROD / RMP (Oct 1986)	None ⁶	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	--	X-visual ⁵	X-visual ⁵	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations¹

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Area of Resource Conflict or Amendment Consideration	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative G	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
BLM	St. George FO	Utah	Saint George FO ROD and RMP (Mar 1999)	None ⁶	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	X ⁶ -SSS wildlife	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--
BLM	Caliente FO	Nevada	Ely District Approved RMP (Aug 2008)	A, B, C, D	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	X	X	--	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	X-visual ⁴	X-visual ⁴	X-visual ⁴	X-visual ⁴	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BLM	Las Vegas FO	Nevada	ROD for the Approved Las Vegas RMP and Final EIS (Oct 1998); Approved ROD Maintenance Record, January 2007	None ⁶	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	X ⁶ -SMAs, water, visual ⁵	X ⁶ -SMAs, water, visual ⁵	X ⁶ -visual ⁵	X ⁶ - water, visual ⁵	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	X ⁶ -SMAs, visual ⁵
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--
USFS	Ashley National Forest	Utah	Ashley National Forest LRMP (Nov 1986)	Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	X-visual ¹
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations¹

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Area of Resource Conflict or Amendment Consideration	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative G	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
USFS	Uinta National Forest Planning Area	Utah	LRMP Uinta National Forest (May 2003)	A, E, F, G, Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	X ¹	N/A	N/A	N/A	X ¹	X ¹	X ¹	X ¹	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	X- visual ⁶	N/A	N/A	N/A	X- visual ⁶	X- visual ⁶	X-visual ⁶	X-visual ⁶	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
USFS	Manti-La Sal National Forest	Utah	LRMP Manti-La Sal National Forest (Nov 1986)	B,D	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	--	--	N/A	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	--	X-visual ¹	N/A	X-visual ¹	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	N/A	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
USFS	Fishlake National Forest	Utah	Fishlake National Forest LRMP (Jun 1986)	C	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	N/A	--	X-visual ^{1,4,5}	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
USFS	Dixie National Forest	Utah	LRMP for the Dixie National Forest (Sept 1986)	Ox Valley East, Ox Valley West, Pinto Alternative Variations	Utility Corridor Restriction ² / ROW Exclusion Area	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--
					Conflict with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines ³	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	X- visual ¹

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations¹

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Area of Resource Conflict or Amendment Consideration	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative G	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--

¹ Non-conformance/inconsistency issues identified require a plan amendment before the Project could proceed, if approved.

² Non-conformance/inconsistency issues related to utility corridors were only identified for agency plans that have restrictions to locating ROWs within corridors or the designated corridor was identified for underground only utilities.

³ Resource conflicts were identified from affected management plans; however, these issues do not necessarily require a plan amendment as some issues allow exceptions in the current plan.

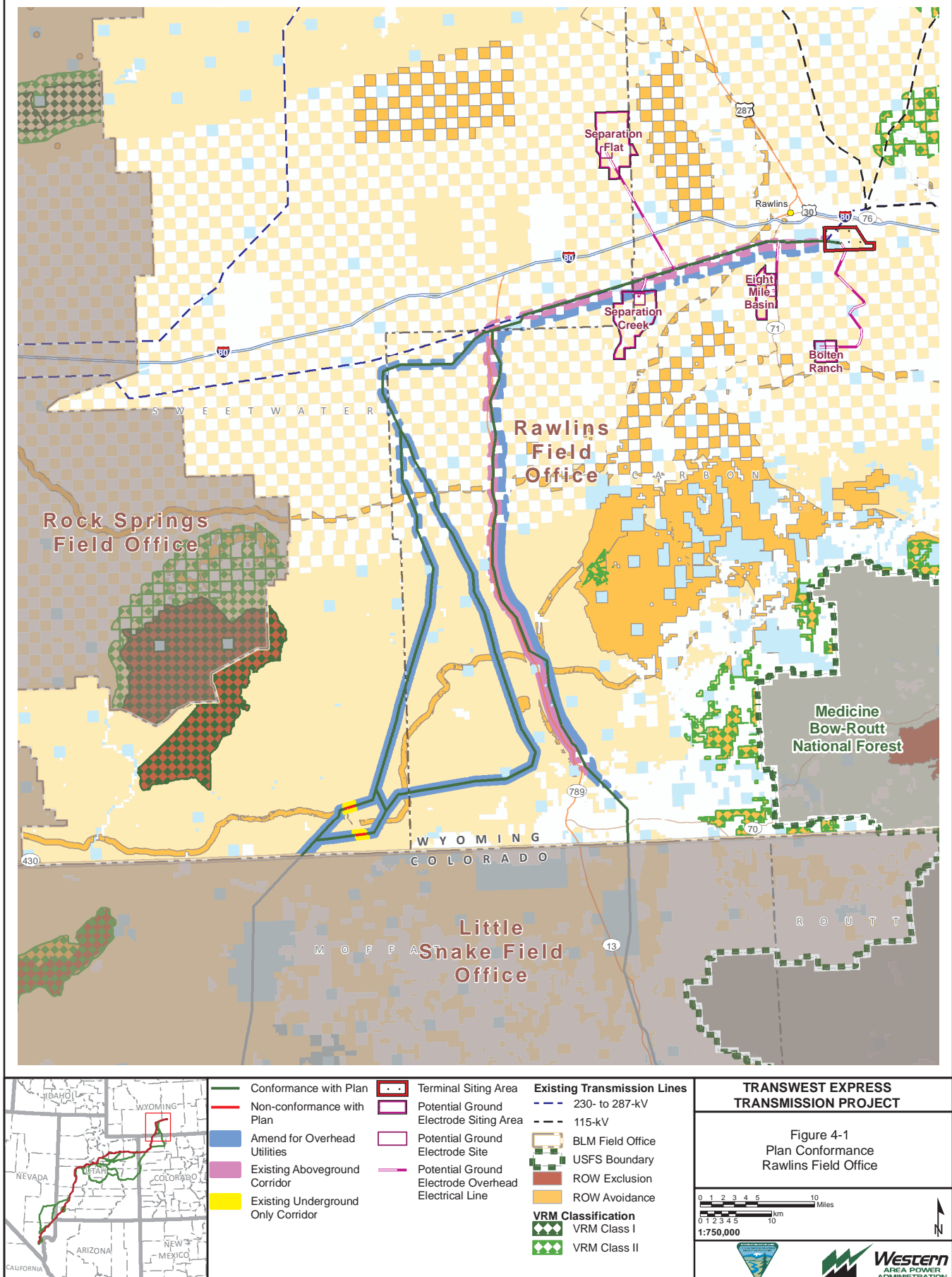
⁴ Non-conformance issues as they pertain to visual resources on BLM-administered lands include areas of VRM Class I and II outside of designated utility corridors. Inconsistency issues as they pertain to visual resources on USFS-administered lands includes areas of VQO Preservation, Retention, and Partial Retention or SIO Very High and High that is not co-located with existing transmission or within a designated utility corridor.

⁵ Areas that would conflict with visual quality objectives; however, these areas are either located within a designated utility corridor, co-located with existing overhead transmission, or could be mitigated so as to not conflict with the current management plan for the area. Therefore, plan amendments for these conflicts are not necessarily required, but are mitigated as determined by federal land managers.

⁶ Through discussions with federal land managers and information considered, it was determined that a plan amendment was not necessary to address the conflicts identified. These resource conflicts could be addressed through other measures, including exceptions, as allowed through the current area plan.

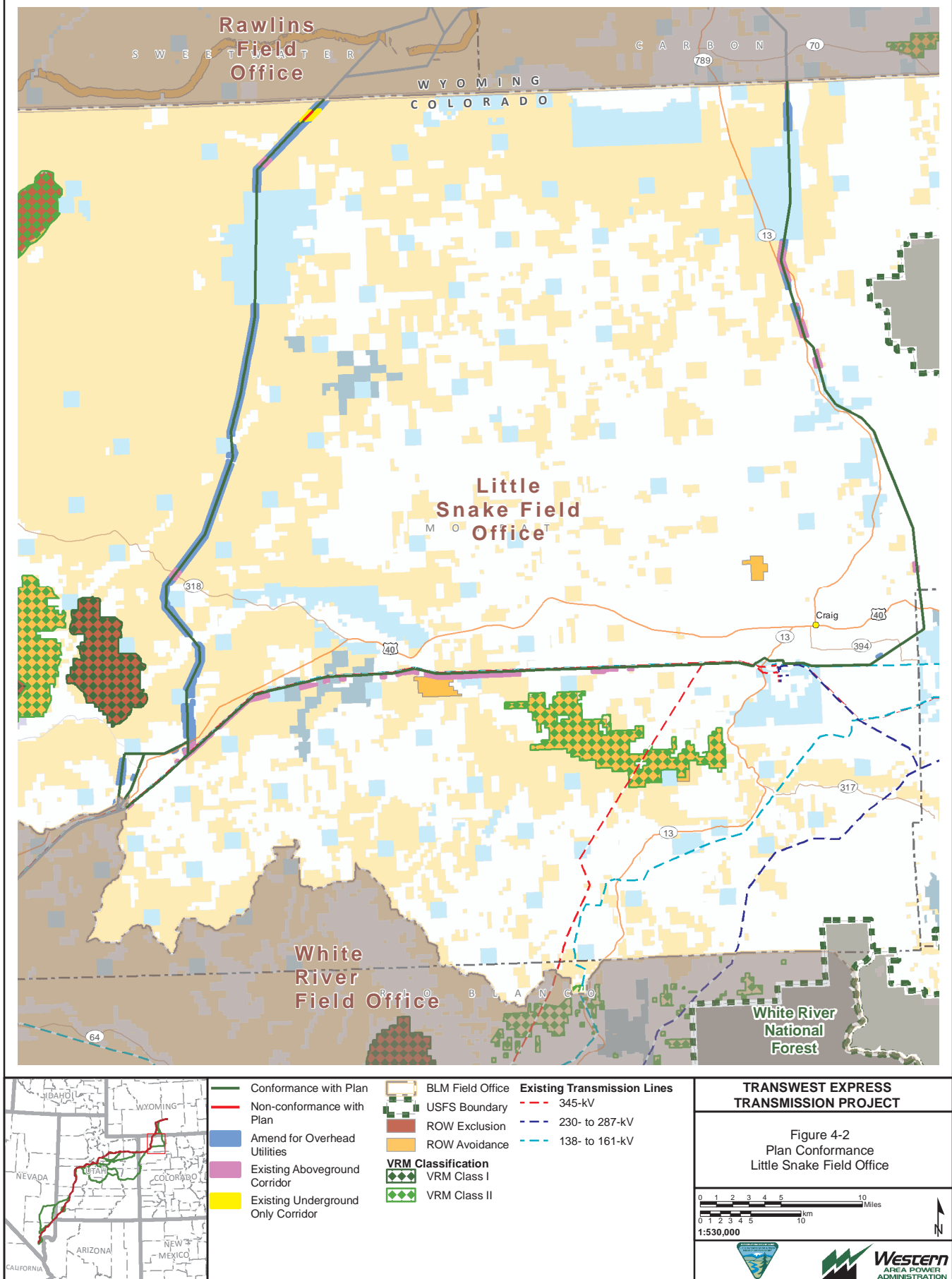
⁷ In March 2008, the Uinta National Forest and the Wasatch-Cache National Forest were combined into one administrative unit (Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest). Each of these forests continues to operate under individual forest plans approved in 2003. The term "Uinta National Forest Planning Area" is used to refer to the portion of the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest managed under the 2003 LRMP for the Uinta National Forest.

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_v2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_BLM_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd



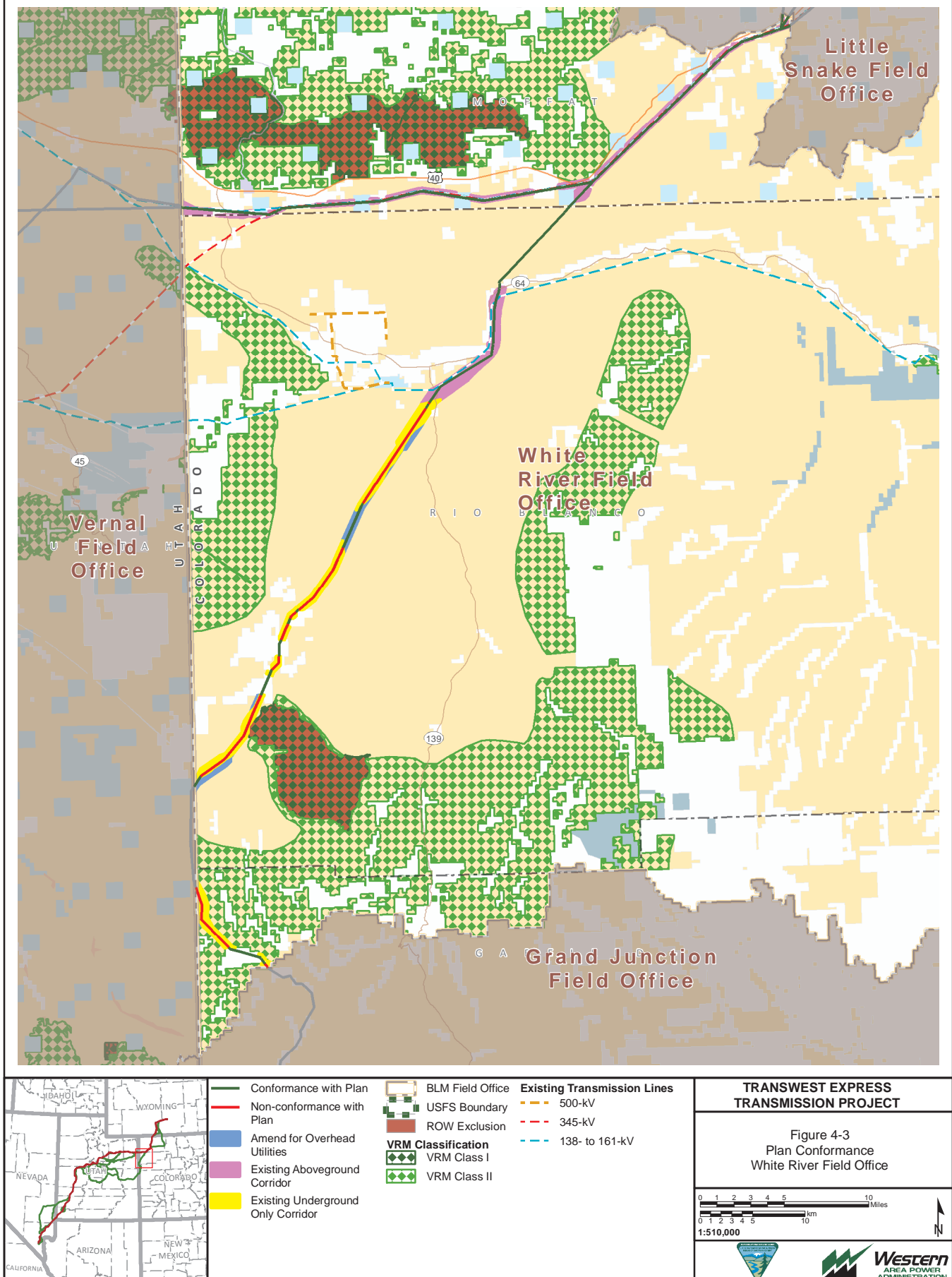
Exported On: 2/17/2015

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_v2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_BLM_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd



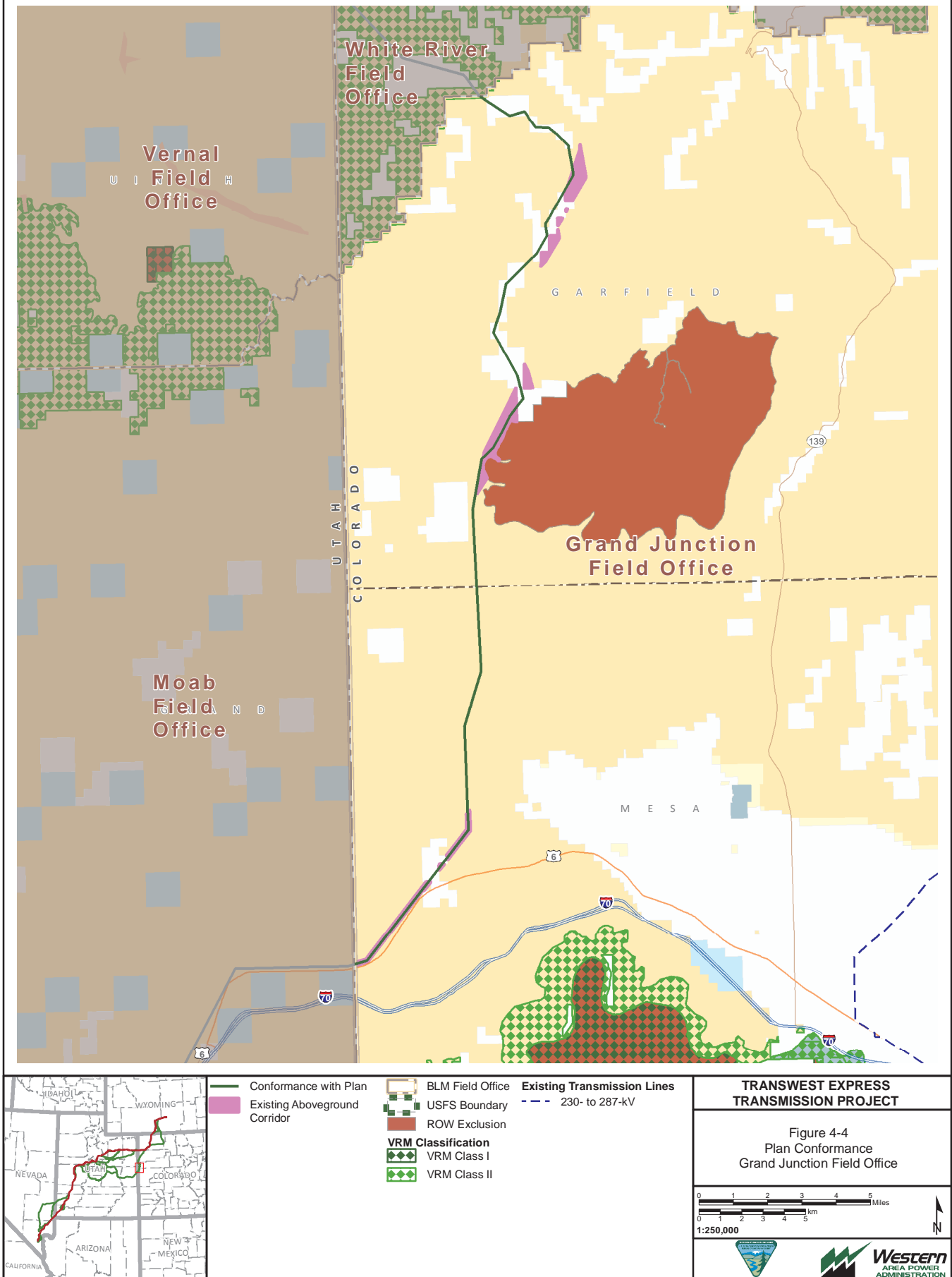
Exported On: 2/17/2015

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_v2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_BLM_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd



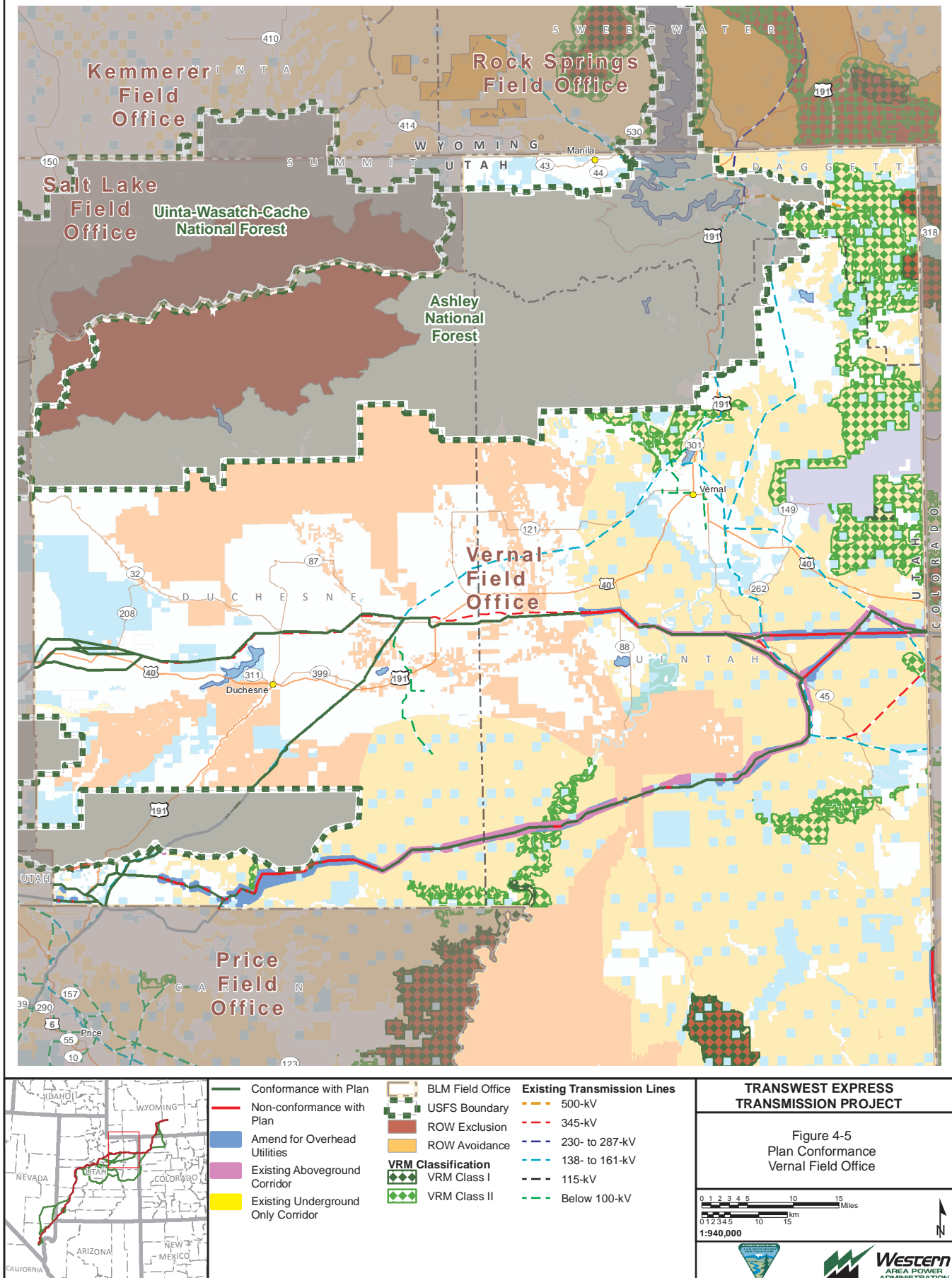
Exported On: 2/17/2015

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_v2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_BLM_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd



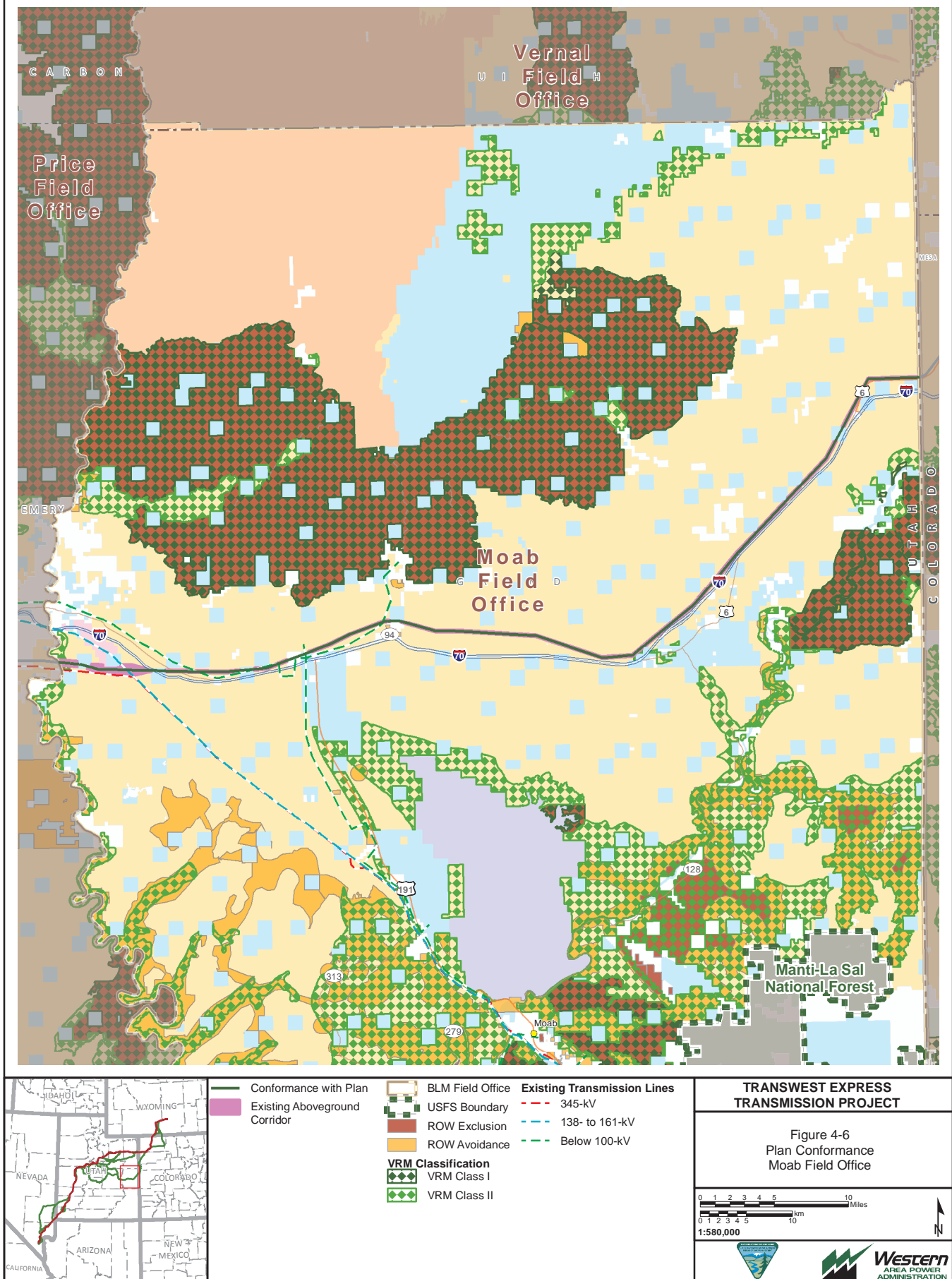
Exported On: 2/17/2015

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_v2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_BLM_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd



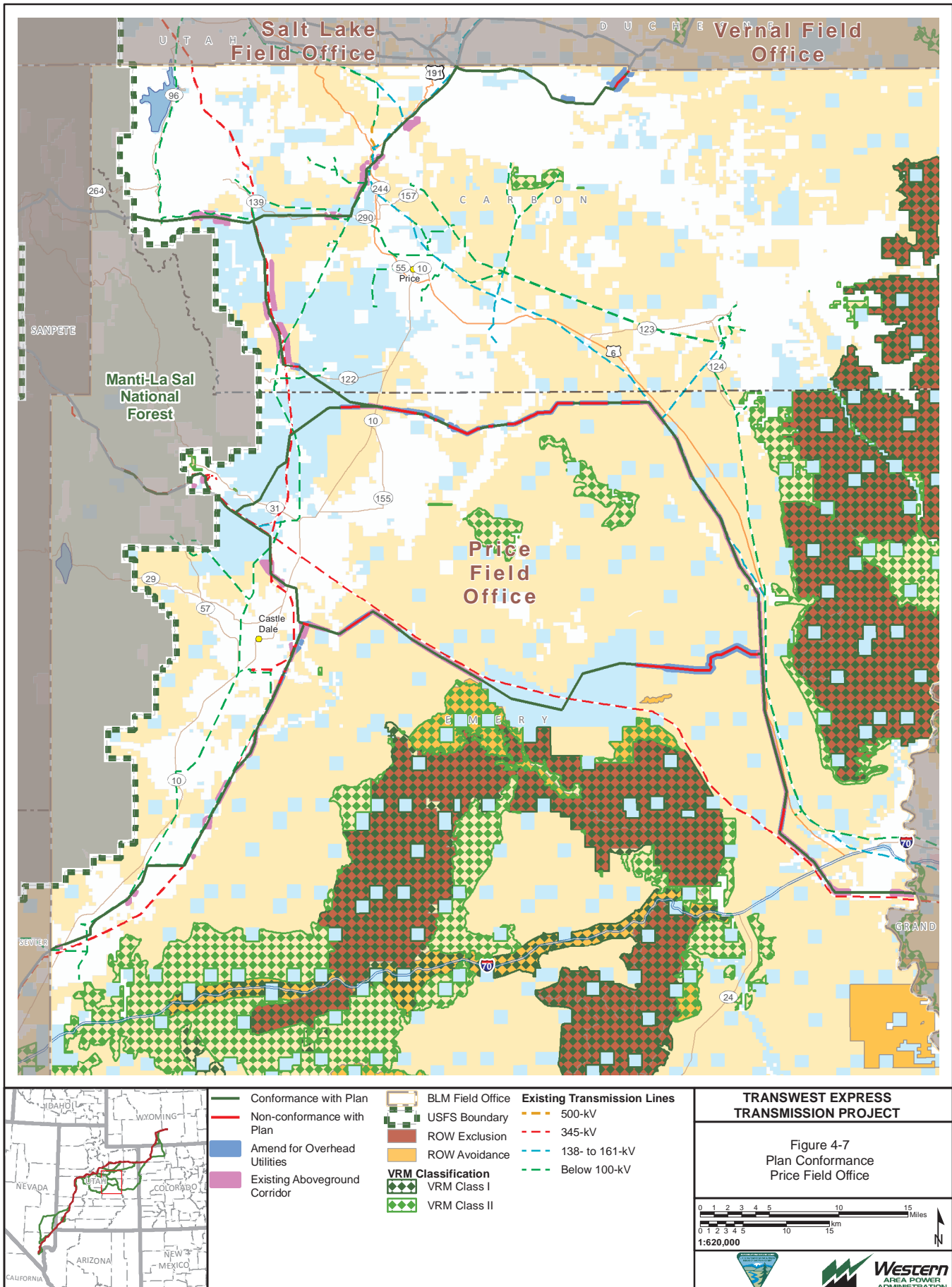
Exported On: 2/17/2015

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_v2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_BLM_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd

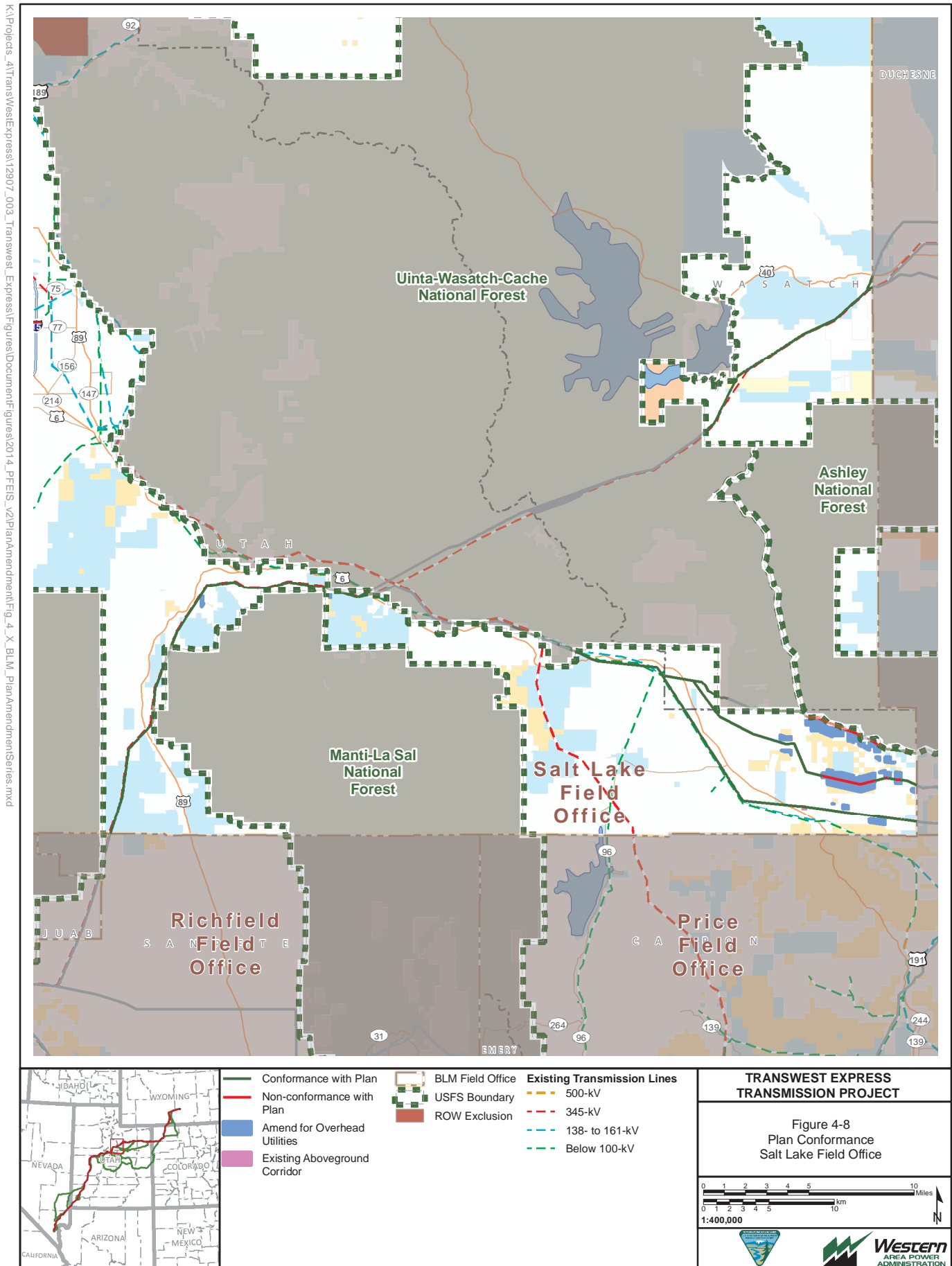


Exported On: 2/17/2015

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_v2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_BLM_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd

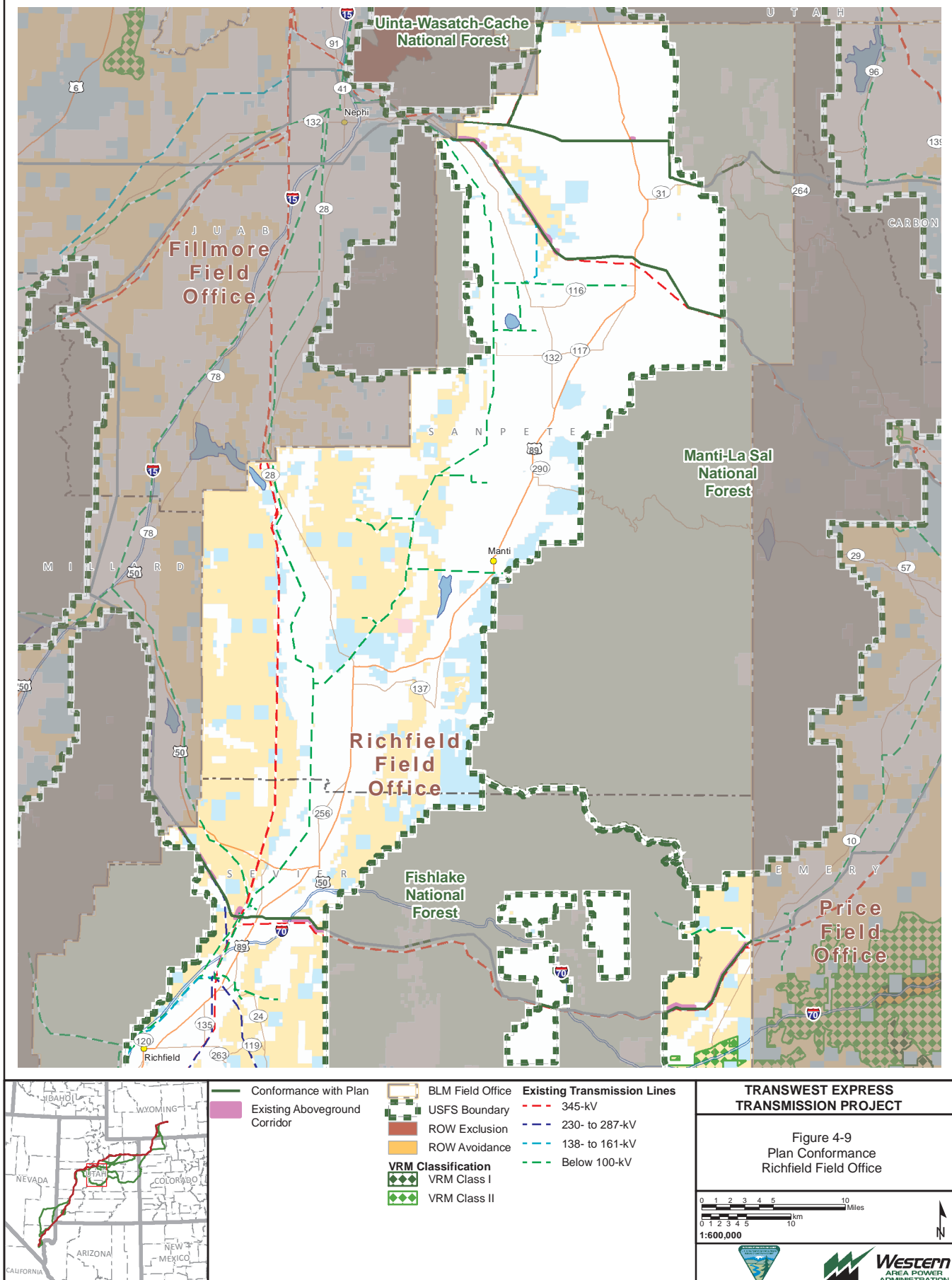


Exported On: 2/17/2015



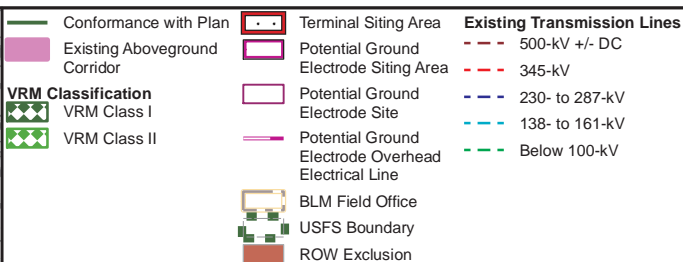
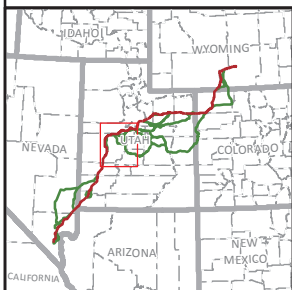
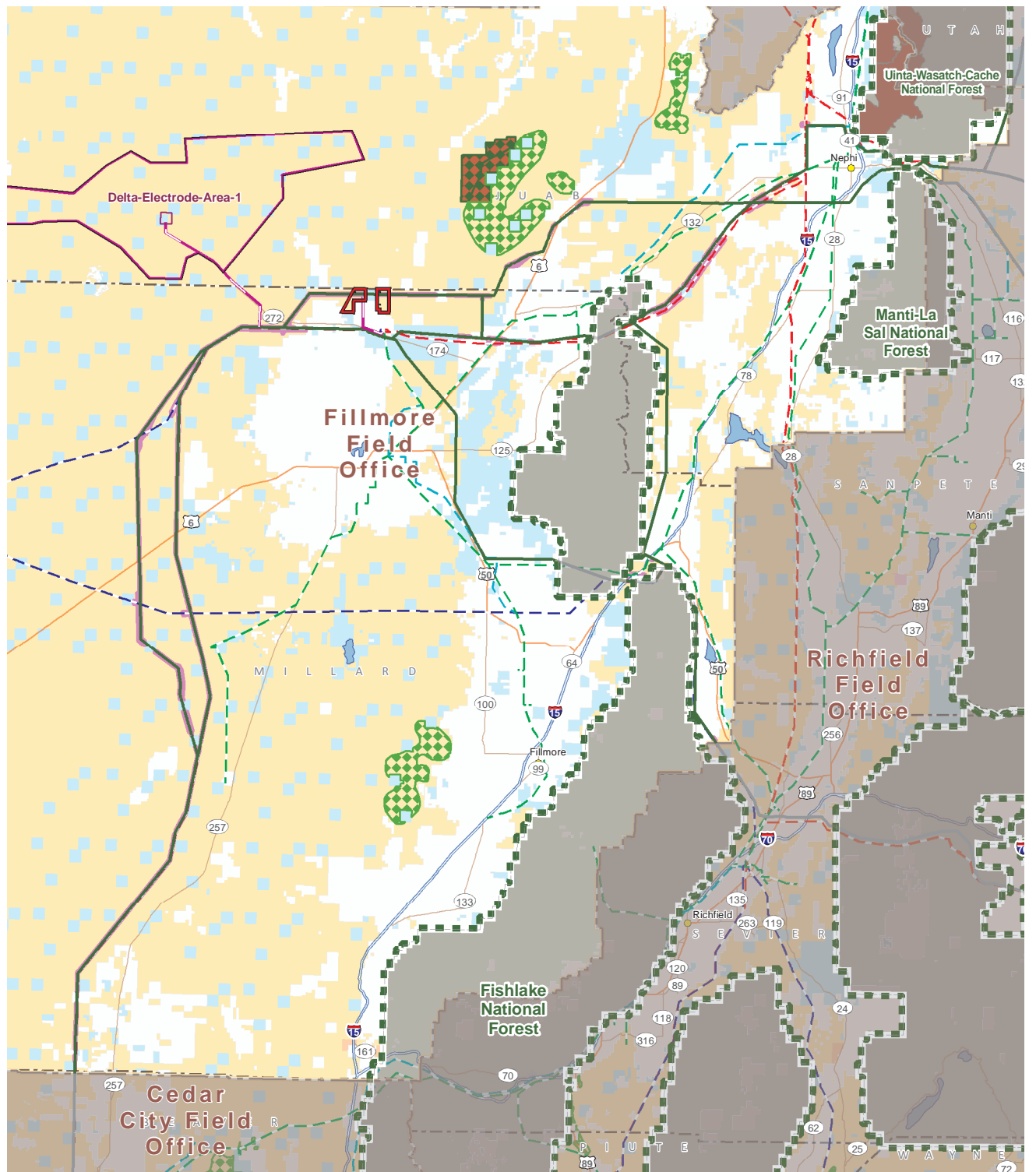
Exported On: 2/17/2015

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_v2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_BLM_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd



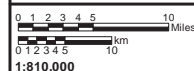
Exported On: 2/17/2015

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_v2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_BLM_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd



TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

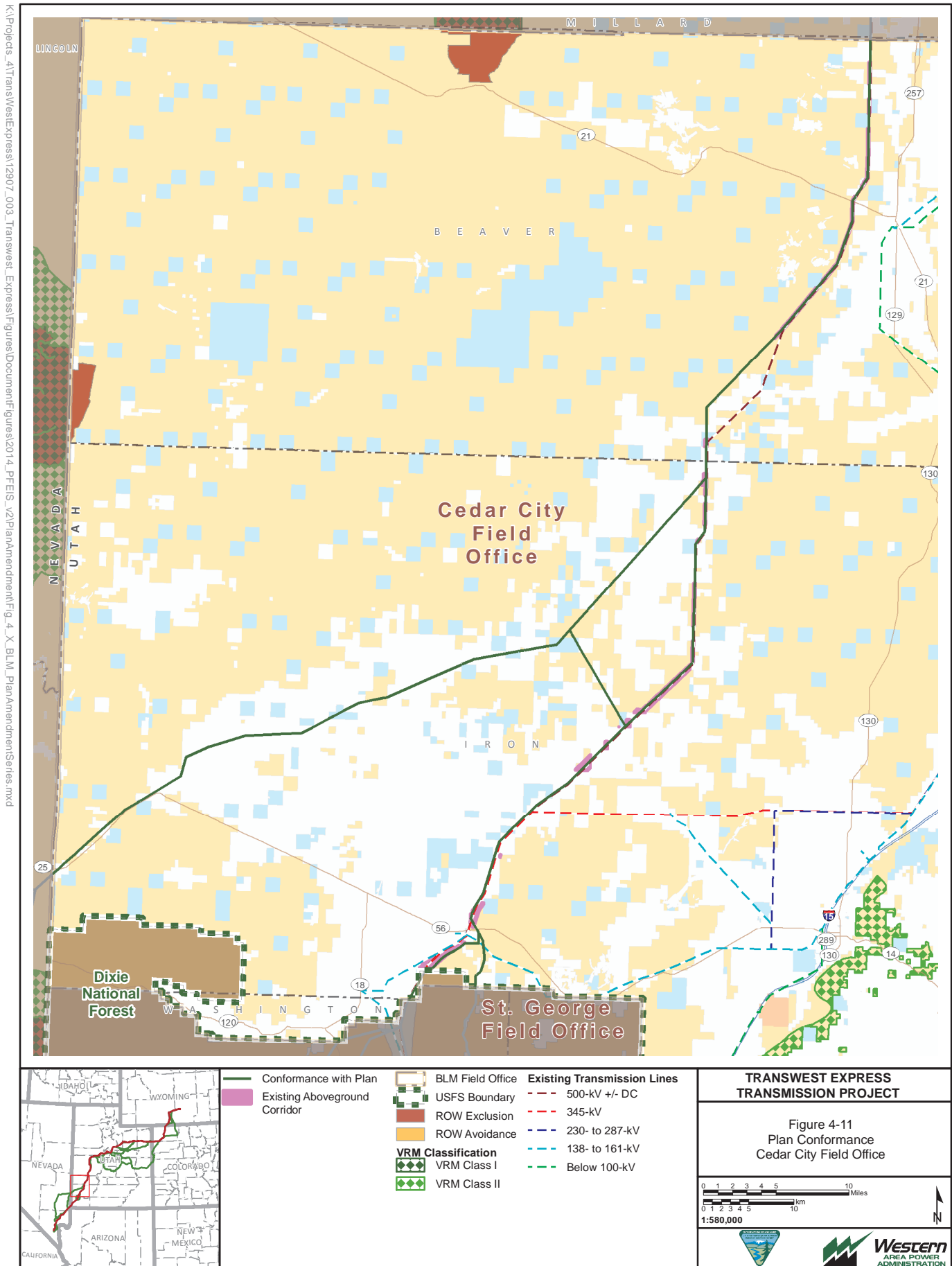
Figure 4-10
Plan Conformance
Fillmore Field Office



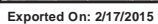
1:810,000

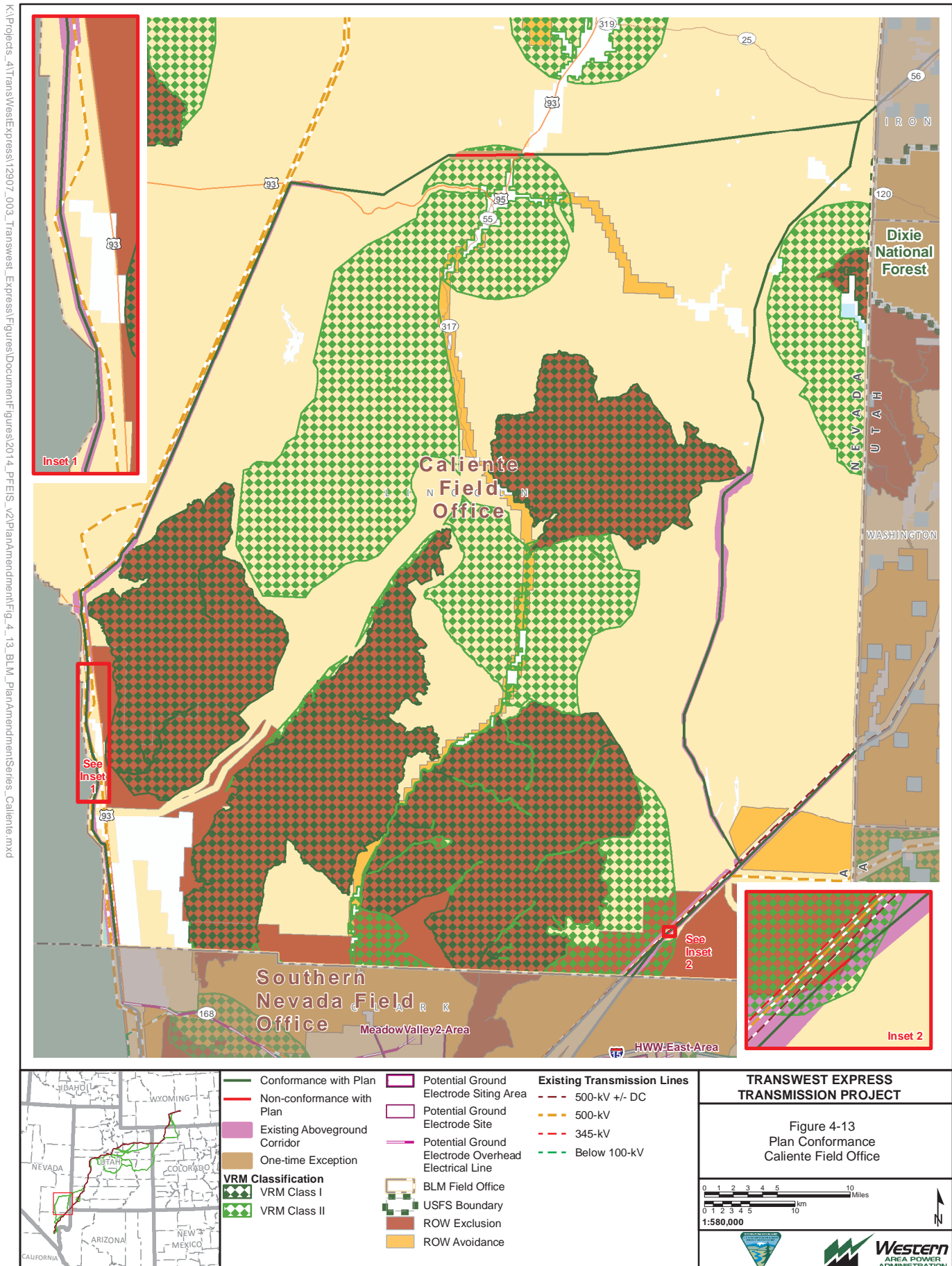


Exported On: 2/17/2015

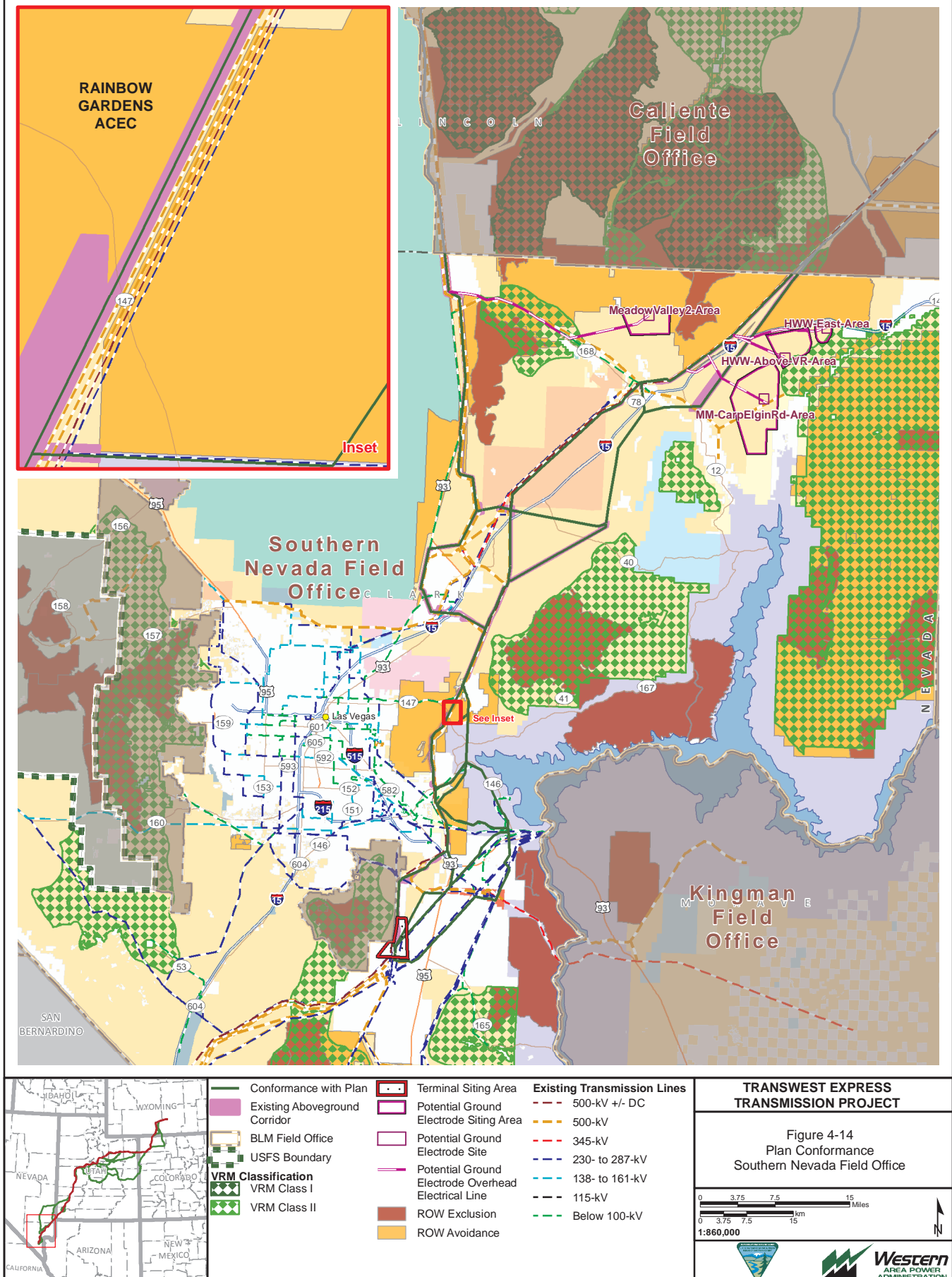


Exported On: 2/17/2015



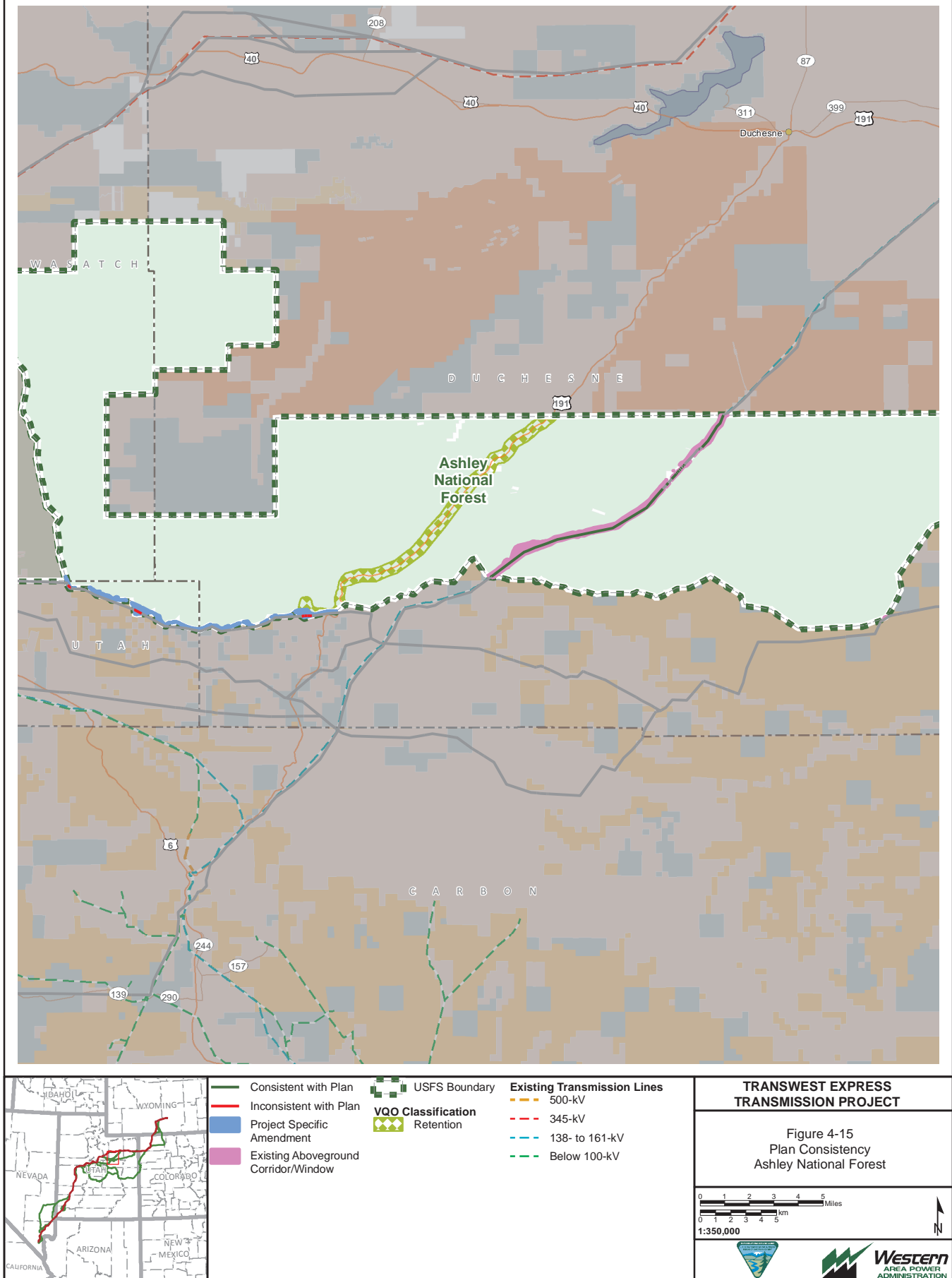


K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\4_14_BLM_PlanAmendmentSeries_SouthernNevada.mxd



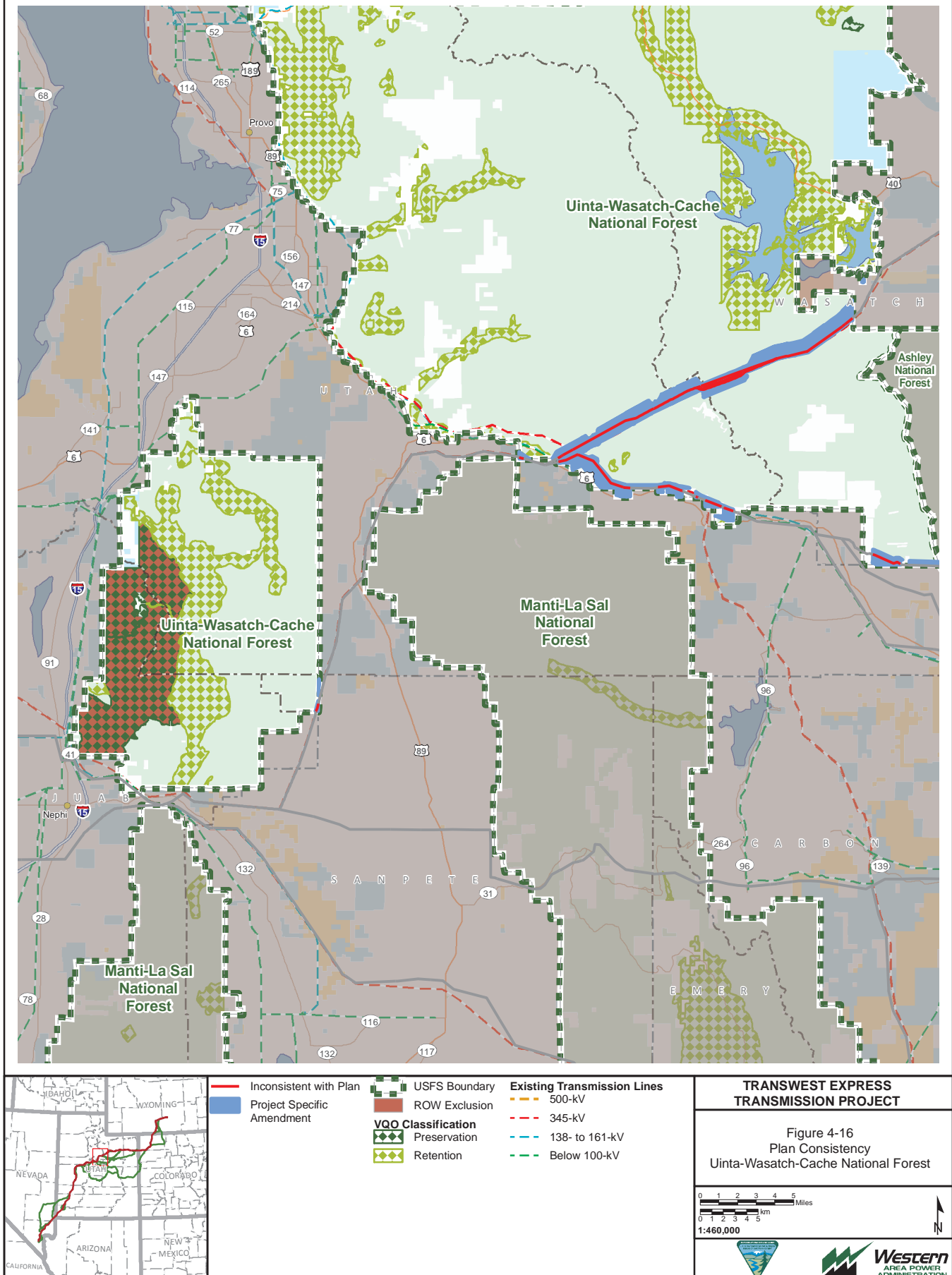
Exported On: 2/17/2015

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_V2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_FS_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd

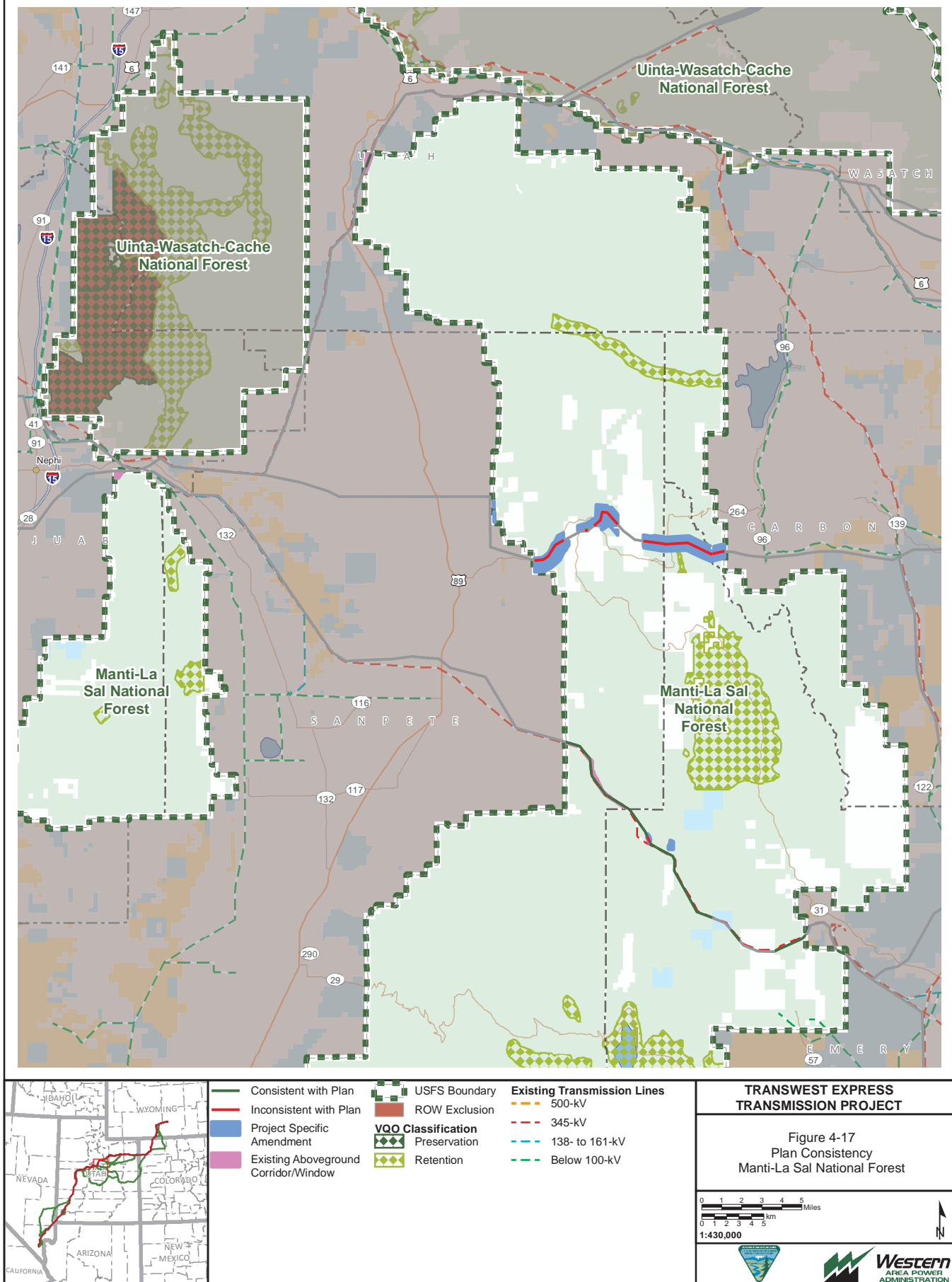


Exported On: 2/17/2015

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_V2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_FS_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd

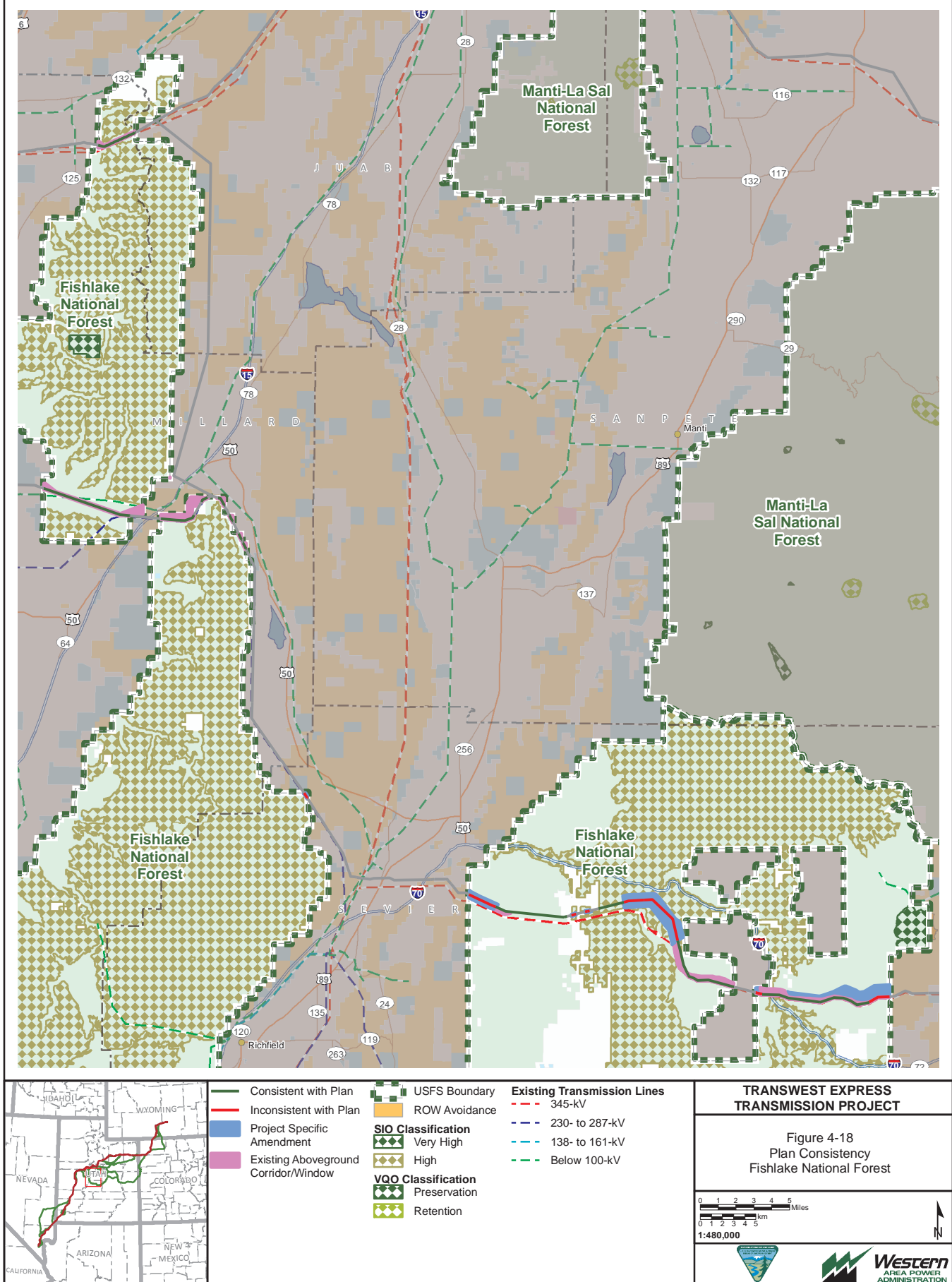


K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_V2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_FS_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd



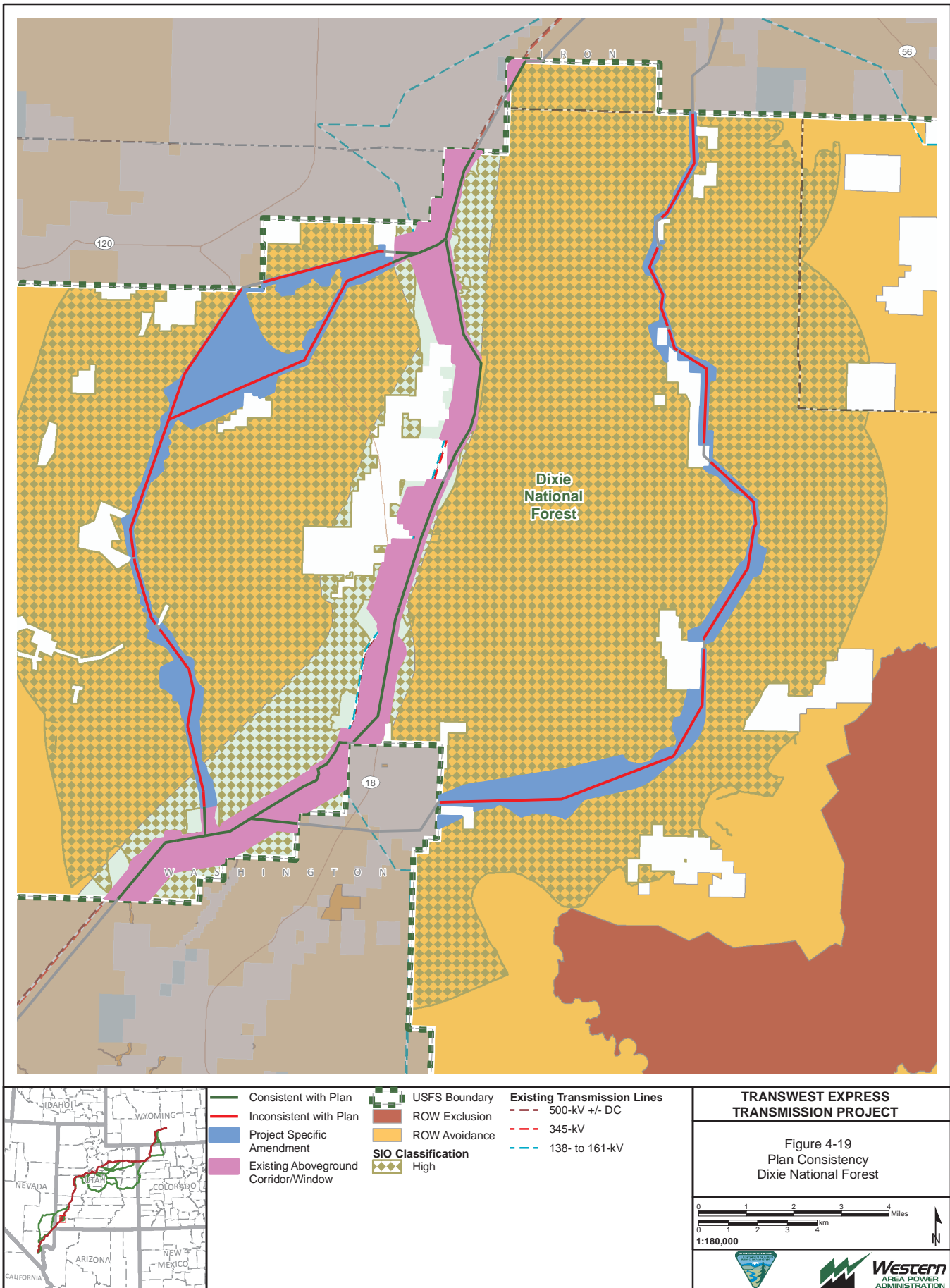
Exported On: 2/17/2015

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_V2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_FS_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd



Exported On: 2/17/2015

K:\Projects_4\TransWestExpress\12907_003_TransWest_Express\Figures\Document\Figures\2014_PFEIS_v2\PlanAmendment\Fig_4_X_FS_PlanAmendmentSeries.mxd



Exported On: 2/17/2015

4.4.1 BLM Rawlins Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, and D traverse lands administered by the Rawlins FO. According to the RMP (RMP ROD, p. 2-17), “all BLM-administered public lands, except WSAs and some SD/MAs (including ACECs), are open to consideration for placement of transportation and utility ROW systems. Each transportation system and utility ROW will be located adjacent to existing facilities, when possible.” Appendix A-34 of the RMP details ROW corridor and selection criteria. All alternatives traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures, including buffers related to protections for raptors and historic trails, and areas that would conflict with visual resource objectives. In addition to these resource conflicts, Alternative C also would conflict with buffers to protect surface water.

Table 4-2 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Rawlins FO. In addition to the amendments proposed for areas of non-conformance, the BLM requested a plan amendment to designate a proposed new utility corridor to minimize environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs for the Project and other RFFA transmission projects within the FO.

Table 4-2 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Rawlins FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Rawlins FO				
A	1 mile	Underground-only corridor crossing	Proposed new utility corridor	78 miles
B (Agency Preferred)	1 mile	Underground-only corridor crossing	Proposed new utility corridor	81 miles
C	n/a	None	Proposed new utility corridor	63 miles
D	1 mile	Underground-only corridor crossing	Proposed new utility corridor	92 miles
Northern Terminal	n/a	None	None	n/a
Bolten Ranch Ground Electrode	n/a	None	None	n/a
Separation Flat Ground Electrode	n/a	None	None	n/a
Separation Creek Ground Electrode	n/a	None	None	n/a
Eight Mile Basin Ground Electrode	n/a	None	None	n/a

Proposed plan amendment language for each alternative is provided below.

For Alternatives A and B, ROW decisions listed under Section 2.3.5 Lands and Realty in the RMP (p. 2-18) and Table A34-1 in Appendix 34 (p. A34-1) and Table A (page A-15) in the ROD for the Westwide Energy Corridor (WWEC) would be amended as follows for 78 miles (Alternative A) and 81 miles (Alternative B) (***new text in bold italics***):

Utility/Transportation Systems

1. Areas with important resource values will be avoided where possible in planning for new facility placement (600,290 acres). If it becomes necessary for facilities (i.e., linear ROWs) to be placed within avoidance areas, effects will be intensively managed. Avoidance and exclusion areas are identified on Map 2-33b and Table 2-5.

2. Utility corridors are designated as follows:

- a. **Rawlins-Wamsutter:** *The existing WVEC multi-modal utility corridor south of I-80 is expanded to 7,000 feet in width between Rawlins and Wamsutter to allow for all utilities including high voltage overhead transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. Minimum separation distance from existing transmission is required in greater sage-grouse core areas. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.*
- b. **Wamsutter-Powder Rim:** *A north-south, 3,500-foot-wide utility corridor is designated along the Sweetwater/Carbon County line to allow for all utilities including high voltage overhead transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.*

Table A34-1. Designated ROW Corridors

Corridor	Width	Uses
Spence-Bairoil-Jim Bridger 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320'	Overhead utilities only
CIG/Entrega/WIC Transmission lines	1,320'	Buried utilities only
Lost Creek Pipeline	1,320'	Buried utilities only
WAPA 115 kV Transmission Line	1,320'	Overhead utilities only
I-80 Corridor	1,320' on either side of the interstate	Buried utilities only
Rawlins-Wamsutter WVEC Corridor ¹	3,500'-7,000'	Multi-modal
Highway 789	1,320' east of the highway	Overhead utilities
Wamsutter-Powder Rim Corridor	3,500'	All utilities
Rock Springs to Dave Johnston 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320' north from the existing line	Overhead utilities only

¹ Not included in the Table A34-1 of the RMP, but designated through the WVEC land use plan amendment process.

For Alternative C, ROW decisions listed under Section 2.3.5 Lands and Realty in the RMP (p. 2-18) and Table A34-1 in Appendix 34 (p. A34-1) and Table A (page A-15) in the ROD for WVEC would be amended as follows for 63 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

Utility/Transportation Systems

1. Areas with important resource values will be avoided where possible in planning for new facility placement (600,290 acres). If it becomes necessary for facilities (i.e., linear ROWs) to be placed within avoidance areas, effects will be intensively managed. Avoidance and exclusion areas are identified on Map 2-33b and Table 2-5.
2. **Utility corridors are designated as follows:**
 - a. **Rawlins-Creston:** *The existing WVEC multi-modal utility corridor south of I-80 is expanded to 7,000 feet in width between Rawlins and Creston to allow for all utilities including high voltage overhead transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. Minimum separation distance from existing transmission is required in sage-grouse core areas. All possible*

measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.

- b. State Highway 789: The existing utility corridor along SH-789 from Creston to Baggs is expanded to 7,000 feet in width to allow for all utilities including high voltage overhead transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. Minimum separation distance from existing transmission is required in greater sage-grouse core areas. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.***

Table A34-1. Designated ROW Corridors

Corridor	Width	Uses
Spence-Baird-Jim Bridger 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320'	Overhead utilities only
CIG/Entrega/WIC Transmission lines	1,320'	Buried utilities only
Lost Creek Pipeline	1,320'	Buried utilities only
WAPA 115 kV Transmission Line	1,320'	Overhead utilities only
I-80 Corridor	1,320' on either side of the interstate	Buried utilities only
Rawlins-Creston WVEC Corridor ¹	<i>3,500'-7,000'</i>	Multi-modal
Highway 789	<i>1,320' east of the highway 7,000'</i>	Overhead utilities
Rock Springs to Dave Johnston 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320' north from the existing line	Overhead utilities only

¹ Not included in the Table A34-1 of the RMP but designated through the WVEC land use plan amendment process.

For Alternative D, ROW decisions listed under Section 2.3.5 Lands and Realty in the RMP (p. 2-18) and Table A34-1 in Appendix 34 (p. A34-1) and Table A (page A-15) in the ROD for WVEC would be amended as follows for 92 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

Utility/Transportation Systems

- Areas with important resource values will be avoided where possible in planning for new facility placement (600,290 acres). If it becomes necessary for facilities (i.e., linear ROWs) to be placed within avoidance areas, effects will be intensively managed. Avoidance and exclusion areas are identified on Map 2-33b and Table 2-5.
- Utility corridors are designated as follows:***
 - Rawlins-Wamsutter: The existing WVEC multi-modal utility corridor south of I-80 is expanded to 7,000 feet in width between Rawlins and Wamsutter to allow for all utilities including high voltage overhead transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. Minimum separation distance from existing transmission is required in greater sage-grouse core areas. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.***
 - Wamsutter-Baggs-Powder Rim: A 3,500-foot-wide utility corridor is designated north-south to Baggs then east-west to Powder Rim to allow for all utilities including high voltage overhead transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of***

avoidance or minimization are not feasible. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.

Table A34-1. Designated ROW Corridors

Corridor	Width	Uses
Spence-Bairoil-Jim Bridger 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320'	Overhead utilities only
CIG/Entrega/WIC Transmission lines	1,320'	Buried utilities only
Lost Creek Pipeline	1,320'	Buried utilities only
WAPA 115 kV Transmission Line	1,320'	Overhead utilities only
I-80 Corridor	1,320' on either side of the interstate	Buried utilities only
Rawlins-Creston WVEC Corridor ¹	3,500' 7,000'	Multi-modal
Highway 789	1,320' east of the highway	Overhead utilities
Wamsutter-Baggs-Powder Rim Corridor	3,500'	All utilities
Rock Springs to Dave Johnston 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320' north from the existing line	Overhead utilities only

¹ Not included in the Table A34-1 of the RMP but designated through the WVEC land use plan amendment process.

4.4.2 BLM Little Snake Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, and D as well as the Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 traverse lands administered by the Little Snake FO. All alternatives are located either partly or wholly outside of designated corridors. According to the RMP (RMP ROD, p. RMP-51), "Section 503 of FLPMA provides for the designation of ROW corridors and encourages use of in-common ROWs to minimize environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs. BLM policy, as described in BLM Manual 2801.13B1, is to encourage prospective applicants to locate their proposals within corridors...The remainder of the [Little Snake] FO will be open for the consideration of ROWs on a case-by-case basis, with stipulations identified during activity level environmental reviews."

All alternatives and micro-siting options traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures, as follows:

- Alternatives A, B, and D cross buffers related to protections for raptors, Greater sage-grouse, black-footed ferret management areas, perennial water sources, and areas that would conflict with current visual resource objectives.
- Alternative C crosses buffers related to protections for raptors, Greater sage-grouse, and areas that would conflict with visual resource objectives.
- Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 would cross buffers related to protections for Greater sage-grouse.

Resource conflicts with Alternative C would occur within a designated utility corridor, where exceptions can be granted if mitigation or avoidance is not feasible (RMP ROD, Appendix B). Resource conflicts for Alternatives A, B, D, and Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 occur in areas outside of designated corridors.

Table 4-3 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Little Snake FO. In addition to the amendments proposed for areas of non-conformance, the BLM requested a plan amendment to designate a proposed new utility corridor to minimize

environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs for the Project and other RFFA transmission projects within the FO.

Table 4-3 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Little Snake FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Little Snake FO				
A	1 mile	Underground-only corridor crossing	Proposed new utility corridor	36 miles
B (Agency Preferred)	1 mile	Underground-only corridor crossing	Proposed new utility corridor	36 miles
C	n/a	None	Proposed new utility corridor	6 miles
D	1 mile	Underground-only corridor crossing	Proposed new utility corridor	36 miles
Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 3	n/a	None	Proposed new utility corridor	<1 mile
Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 4	n/a	None	Proposed new utility corridor	2 miles

Proposed plan amendment language for each alternative is provided below.

For Alternatives A, B, and D, ROW decisions listed in Table 2-17 for Lands and Realty in the RMP (p. RMP-53) would be amended as follows for 36 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

Rights-of-Way

Encourage ROWs in the following existing corridors: major roads including county roads (e.g., CR 20, 4, 7, and 57), power transmission lines, and oil and gas pipelines.

A north-south, 1,800-foot-wide aboveground utility corridor is designated along the foothills of Sevenmile Ridge east of CR-75 from the Wyoming state line south to US-40 at Maybell. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

For Alternative C, ROW decisions listed in Table 2-17 for Lands and Realty in the RMP (p. RMP-53) would be amended as follows for 6 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

Rights-of-Way

Encourage ROWs in the following existing corridors: major roads including county roads (e.g., CR 20, 4, 7, and 57), power transmission lines, and oil and gas pipelines.

Along SH-13, additional areas have been added to the existing corridor to accommodate utilities entering Colorado from Wyoming.

For Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4, ROW decisions listed in Table 2-17 for Lands and Realty in the RMP (p. RMP-53) would be amended as follows for less than 1 or 2 miles, respectively (***new text in bold italics***):

Rights-of-Way

Encourage ROWs in the following existing corridors: major roads including county roads (e.g., CR 20, 4, 7, and 57), power transmission lines, and oil and gas pipelines.

Along US-40, additional areas have been added to accommodate utilities to cross Deerlodge Road associated with Dinosaur National Monument.

4.4.3 BLM White River Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, D, E, F, and G and the Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 4 traverse lands administered by the White River FO. According to the RMP (RMP ROD, p. 2-50), Applications for land use authorizations (e.g., ROWs, leases, and permits) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The remainder of the Resource Area (outside of exclusion and avoidance areas) will be considered open for land use authorizations. All alternatives traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures, as follows:

- Alternatives B and C cross buffers related to protections for raptors, perennial water sources, areas designated as VRM Class II, and areas that would conflict with visual resource objectives.
- Alternatives A, D, E, F, G, and Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 4 would cross buffers related to protections for raptors.

Alternatives A, D, E, F, G, and Tuttle Ranch Micrositing Option 4 are located within utility corridors designated through WVEC where exceptions may be granted if avoidance or mitigation would not be feasible. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required for those alternatives.

In the White River FO, Alternatives B and C would be out of conformance for 25 miles where the Project intersects with an underground-only designated utility corridor, the 1-mile-wide Dragon Trail-Atchee Ridge ROW corridor. In addition, a portion of the route passes through VRM Class II (as designated in the 1997 RMP) in Garfield County, an area that inventoried as VRI Class III in 2011. To minimize environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs for the Project and other RFFA transmission projects within the FO, the BLM has indicated that a plan amendment would be needed to designate a new utility corridor as part of this Project for 28 miles.

Table 4-4 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the White River FO. In addition to the amendments proposed for areas of non-conformance, the BLM requested a plan amendment to designate a proposed new utility corridor to minimize environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs for the Project and other RFFA transmission projects within the FO.

Table 4-4 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the White River FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
White River FO				
A	n/a	None	None	n/a
B	25 miles	Underground-only corridor crossing	Proposed new utility corridor	44 miles
C	25 miles	Underground-only corridor crossing	Proposed new utility corridor	44 miles
D	n/a	None	None	n/a
E	n/a	None	None	n/a
F	n/a	None	None	n/a
G (Agency Preferred)	n/a	None	None	n/a
Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 4	n/a	None	None	n/a

Proposed plan amendment language for each alternative is provided below.

For Alternatives B and C, utility corridor decisions in the RMP (p. 2-51) would be amended as follows for 44 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

DRAGON TRAIL-ATCHEE RIDGE: This corridor follows the route once proposed as the Rangely Loop segment of the Northwest Pipeline Expansion Project. It runs south from Rangely, to the vicinity of Baxter Pass, is approximately ***1,800 feet to 1 mile wide***, and will accommodate all buried ***and overhead*** linear facilities. ***Power lines located within the designated utility corridor would be exempted from the requirements associated with VRM Class II areas. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.***

4.4.4 BLM Grand Junction Field Office

Proposed routes through this area are considered to be in conformance with the RMP. Alternatives B and C pass through a 4-mile wide utility corridor (from De Beque to Southern Boundary of resource area) for all major power lines, but some portions deviate. While the RMP encourages the use of existing corridors (RMP ROD, p. 2-29), the remaining public lands are suitable for consideration for public utilities.

Alternatives B and C traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures. Alternatives B and C cross portions elk production areas, and areas that would conflict with visual resource objectives. However, these alternatives would be mostly situated within utility corridors designated through the RMP and exceptions could be granted if avoidance or minimization isn't feasible. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required.

Table 4-5 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Grand Junction FO.

Table 4-5 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Grand Junction FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Grand Junction FO				
B	n/a	None	None	n/a
C	n/a	None	None	n/a

4.4.5 BLM Vernal Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation traverse lands administered by the Vernal FO. All alternatives traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures, as follows:

- Alternatives A, E, and G cross buffers related to protections for white-tailed prairie dog colonies, raptors, Greater sage-grouse, floodplain and riparian areas, and areas that conflict with visual resource objectives.
- Alternatives B and C cross buffers related to protections for Mexican spotted owl and floodplain and riparian areas.
- Alternatives D and F cross buffers related to protections for raptors, Greater sage-grouse, Mexican spotted owl, floodplain and riparian areas, the Lower Green River ACEC, the Lower

Green River wild and scenic suitable segment, the White River, and areas that would conflict with current visual resource objectives.

- Alternatives A, D, E, F, G, and the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would cross areas that conflict with current visual resource objectives.
- Alternatives D, E, and F would cross perennial water sources.

Alternative A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and the Reservation Ridge Alternative Connector would be partially situated outside of designated utility corridors. According to decision LAR-42 (RMP ROD, p. 91), major linear ROWs exceeding the size thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment. Appendix K of the Vernal RMP provides for exceptions to VRM in recognized utility corridors (RMP ROD, p. K-14 – 15) and NSO stipulations for surface disturbing activities within the existing ROW corridor near the Four Mile Bottom area where existing pipelines cross the Green River (RMP ROD, p. K-7).

Table 4-6 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Vernal FO.

Table 4-6 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Vernal FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Vernal FO				
A	28 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	28 miles
B	7 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	7 miles
C	7 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	7 miles
D	49 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	49 miles
	<1 mile	Lower Green River ACEC to clarify the type of utilities permitted in the existing utility corridor	Exempt the designated utility corridor at Four Mile Bottom through the Lower Green River ACEC to allow for overhead utilities	<1 mile
	1 mile	Lower Green River suitable segment tentative classification of scenic	Change the tentative classification of the Lower Green River to recreational at the intersection with the Four Mile Bottom utility corridor	1 mile
E	19 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	19 miles

Table 4-6 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Vernal FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
F	55 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	55 miles
	<1 mile	Lower Green River ACEC to clarify the type of utilities permitted in the existing utility corridor	Exempt the designated utility corridor at Four Mile Bottom through the Lower Green River ACEC to allow for overhead utilities	<1 mile
	1 mile	Lower Green River suitable segment tentative classification of scenic	Change the tentative classification of the Lower Green River to recreational at the intersection with the Four Mile Bottom utility corridor	1 mile
G (Agency Preferred)	28 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	28 miles
Reservation Ridge Alternative Connector	3 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	3 miles

Proposed plan amendment language for each alternative is provided below.

For Alternatives A and G, utility corridor decision LAR-42 in the RMP (p. 91) would be amended as follows for 28 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

LAR-42

Major linear ROWs meeting the above thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment.

The RMP has been amended to accommodate a new aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide for high voltage transmission lines requiring straight east-west alignments between the Colorado State line near Dinosaur, Colorado, and Randlett, Utah. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

For Alternatives B and C, utility corridor decision LAR-42 in the RMP (p. 91) would be amended as follows for 7 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

LAR-42

Major linear ROWs meeting the above thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment.

The RMP has been amended to accommodate a new aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide for high voltage transmission lines requiring straight north-south alignments traversing Atchee Ridge Road across the Utah/Colorado State line. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

For Alternative D, utility corridor decision LAR-42 in the RMP (p. 91) would be amended as follows for 49 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

LAR-42

Major linear ROWs meeting the above thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment.

The RMP has been amended to accommodate a new aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide for high voltage transmission lines requiring east-west alignments south of the Ashley National Forest boundary, east of US-191. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

Other amendments for Alternative D are needed to resolve inconsistencies in the RMP where the designated Four Mile Bottom utility corridor intersects with the Lower Green River ACEC and WSR ***(new text in bold italics)***:

Decision ACEC-6 in the RMP (p.119) would be amended as follows for less than 1 mile:

The Lower Green River Corridor (8,470 acres) will continue to be designated as an ACEC. No Surface Occupancy (NSO) will be allowed within line of sight or up to 0.5 mile from the centerline of the river, whichever is less. OHV use will be limited to designated routes. Visual Resources will be managed as Class II. ***See exemptions listed in Appendix K.***

Table 1 Resources of Concern and Stipulations including Exceptions, Modifications, and Waivers in Appendix K (p. K-8):

Special Designations	Lower Green River Corridor and Lower Green River Expansion	CSU/NSO/TL	<p>For oil and gas leasing within the Lower Green River Corridor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero acres will be open to leasing subject to the terms and conditions of the standard lease form. • Approximately 71 acres will be open to leasing subject to moderate constraints such as timing limitations and controlled surface use. • Approximately 8,079 acres will be open to leasing subject to major constraints such as NSO stipulations. • Zero acres will be unavailable for leasing. • Surface disturbing activities within the Lower Green River Corridor and Lower Green River Expansion will be subject to NSO within line of sight or up to 0.5 mile from the centerline of the river, whichever is less for both areas. <p>Exception: An exemption will be granted if the disturbance complemented recreational goals and objectives.</p> <p><i>An exemption is provided to the designated utility corridor at Four Mile Bottom through the Lower Green River ACEC to allow for overhead utilities. As noted under VRM (p. K-14 – 15), utility corridors are exempted from VRM classifications. Utilities through the ACEC should employ technically feasible mitigation to the extent practical to reduce visual impacts, such as minimum separation distance from existing infrastructure, strategic placement of towers, or possible alternative tower design.</i></p> <p>Modification: None</p> <p>Waiver: None</p>
----------------------	--	------------	---

In addition for Alternative D, the tentative classification of the Lower Green River in the Four Mile Bottom utility corridor would need to change from “scenic” to “recreational” since overhead utilities would not be consistent with a scenic classification. The WSR decisions in the RMP (p.122 and 123) would be amended as follows for 1 mile ***(new text in bold italics)***:

WSR-1

Continue to manage previously recommended segments of the Upper Green and Lower Green Rivers to protect their outstandingly remarkable values and the tentative scenic classification until such time that a designation decision is made. ***The tentative classification of the Lower Green River is recreational at the intersection with the Four Mile Bottom utility corridor.***

WSR-7

The segment of the Lower Green River from the public land boundary south of Ouray to the Carbon County line will continue to be managed as previously recommended as a suitable scenic segment to protect its outstandingly remarkable values. Management will include:

- Oil and Gas Leasing – NSO
- Mineral Materials – Closed
- OHV – Limited to designated routes
- VRM – Class I and II.

The tentative classification of the Lower Green River is recreational at the intersection with the Four Mile Bottom utility corridor. As noted in Appendix K (p. K-14 – 15), utility corridors are exempted from VRM classifications. However, utilities crossing the Lower Green River WSR at the Four Mile Bottom utility corridor should employ technically feasible mitigation to the extent practical to reduce visual impacts, such as minimum separation distance from existing infrastructure, strategic placement of towers, or possible alternative tower design.

For Alternative E, utility corridor decision LAR-42 in the RMP (p. 91) would be amended as follows for 19 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

LAR-42

Major linear ROWs meeting the above thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment.

The RMP has been amended to accommodate a new aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide for high voltage transmission lines requiring east-west alignments between SR-88 and Randlett, Utah, west of the existing utility corridor. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

For Alternative F, utility corridor decision LAR-42 in the RMP (p. 91) would be amended as follows for 55 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

LAR-42

Major linear ROWs meeting the above thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment.

The RMP has been amended to accommodate a new aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide for high voltage transmission lines requiring east-west alignments south of the Ashley National Forest boundary, east of US-191. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

Other amendments for Alternative F are needed to resolve inconsistencies in the RMP where the designated Four Mile Bottom utility corridor intersects with the Lower Green River ACEC and WSR (***new text in bold italics***):

Decision ACEC-6 in the RMP (p.119) would be amended as follows for <1 mile:

The Lower Green River Corridor (8,470 acres) will continue to be designated as an ACEC. No Surface Occupancy (NSO) will be allowed within line of sight or up to 0.5 mile from the centerline of the river, whichever is less. OHV use will be limited to designated routes. Visual Resources will be managed as Class II. ***See exemptions listed in Appendix K.***

Table 1 Resources of Concern and Stipulations including Exceptions, Modifications, and Waivers in Appendix K (p. K-8):

Special Designations	Lower Green River Corridor and Lower Green River Expansion	CSU/NSO/TL	<p>For oil and gas leasing within the Lower Green River Corridor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero acres will be open to leasing subject to the terms and conditions of the standard lease form. • Approximately 71 acres will be open to leasing subject to moderate constraints such as timing limitations and controlled surface use. • Approximately 8,079 acres will be open to leasing subject to major constraints such as NSO stipulations. • Zero acres will be unavailable for leasing. • Surface disturbing activities within the Lower Green River Corridor and Lower Green River Expansion will be subject to NSO within line of sight or up to 0.5 mile from the centerline of the river, whichever is less for both areas. <p>Exception: An exemption will be granted if the disturbance complemented recreational goals and objectives.</p> <p><i>An exemption is provided to the designated utility corridor at Four Mile Bottom through the Lower Green River ACEC to allow for overhead utilities. As noted under VRM (p. K-14 – 15), utility corridors are exempted from VRM classifications. Utilities through the ACEC should employ technically feasible mitigation to the extent practical to reduce visual impacts, such as minimum separation distance from existing infrastructure, strategic placement of towers, or possible alternative tower design.</i></p> <p>Modification: None</p> <p>Waiver: None</p>
----------------------	--	------------	---

In addition for Alternative F, the tentative classification of the Lower Green River in the Four Mile Bottom utility corridor would need to change from “scenic” to “recreational” since overhead utilities would not be consistent with a scenic classification. The WSR decisions in the RMP (p.122 and 123) would be amended as follows for 1 mile (***new text in bold italics***):

WSR-1

Continue to manage previously recommended segments of the Upper Green and Lower Green Rivers to protect their outstandingly remarkable values and the tentative scenic classification until such time that a designation decision is made. ***The tentative classification of the Lower Green River is recreational at the intersection with the Four Mile Bottom utility corridor.***

WSR-7

The segment of the Lower Green River from the public land boundary south of Ouray to the Carbon County line will continue to be managed as previously recommended as a suitable scenic segment to protect its outstandingly remarkable values. Management will include:

- Oil and Gas Leasing – NSO
- Mineral Materials – Closed
- OHV – Limited to designated routes
- VRM – Class I and II.

The tentative classification of the Lower Green River is recreational at the intersection with the Four Mile Bottom utility corridor. As noted in Appendix K (p. K-14 – 15), utility corridors are exempted from VRM classifications. However, utilities crossing the Lower Green River WSR at the Four Mile Bottom utility corridor should employ technically feasible mitigation to the extent practical to reduce visual impacts, such as minimum separation distance from existing infrastructure, strategic placement of towers, or possible alternative tower design.

For the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation, utility corridor decision LAR-42 in the RMP (p. 91) would be amended as follows for 3 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

LAR-42

Major linear ROWs meeting the above thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment.

The RMP has been amended to accommodate a new aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide for high voltage transmission lines requiring east-west alignments south of the Ashley National Forest boundary, east of US-191. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

4.4.6 BLM Moab Field Office

Alternatives B and C traverse lands administered by the Moab FO. Proposed routes through this area are considered to be in conformance with the RMP. The RMP does not specifically restrict ROW to designated corridors. Alternatives B and C follow the I-70 utility corridor that includes all major existing ROW as identified in the RMP with a 0.5-mile width on each side of the widest ROW corridor (LAR-14).

Alternatives B and C traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures. Alternatives B and C cross segments of the Old Spanish Trail (within existing designated utility corridors), the Three Rivers and Westwater mineral withdrawal area, select rivers for protection of special status aquatic species, riparian area buffers, and areas that would conflict with current visual resource objectives. However, alternatives would be mostly situated within utility corridors designated through the RMP and exceptions could be granted if avoidance or minimization isn't feasible. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required.

Table 4-7 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Moab FO.

Table 4-7 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Moab FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Moab FO				
B	n/a	None	None	n/a
C	n/a	None	None	n/a

4.4.7 BLM Price Field Office

Alternatives B, C, D, and the Castle Dale and Price Alternative Connectors traverse lands administered by the Price FO. Alternative D and the Castle Dale and Price alternative connectors would not meet resource objectives that establish buffers to protect streams. However, these alternatives are situated within utility corridors designated through the RMP and the transmission line can be designed to avoid the water resource buffers and access roads routed to minimize conflict. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required in those areas.

Alternatives B and C would be partially situated on lands outside of designated corridors and would require a plan amendment to designate new utility corridors in these areas. Alternatives D and the Price and Castle Dale alternative connectors are primarily situated within utility corridors designated through the RMP where they cross BLM-administered land, but small areas of 1 mile or less deviate to outside designated utility corridors that would require amendments to designate new utility corridors in these areas. The RMP identifies utility corridors as the preferred location for future major linear ROWs including transmission (not distribution) lines with a voltage capacity of 69 kV or greater (LAR-23, RMP ROD, p. 122). LAR-24 indicates that any new utility corridors will require a plan amendment (RMP ROD, p. 123).

Alternatives B and C traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures. Alternatives B and C cross segments of the Old Spanish Trail (within existing designated utility corridors), buffers related to protections for white-tailed prairie dog colonies and raptors, and stream protection buffers. Alternative C also would cross areas that would conflict with visual resource objectives. Therefore, plan amendments that allow exceptions for these stipulations in the newly designated utility corridors also would be required.

Table 4-8 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Price FO.

Table 4-8 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Price FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Price FO				
B	19 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	19 miles
C	17 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	17 miles
D	3 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	3 miles
Castle Dale Alternative Connector	<1 mile	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	<1 mile
Price Alternative Connector	<1 mile	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	<1 mile

Proposed plan amendment language for each alternative is provided below.

For Alternative B, utility corridor decision LAR-22 in the RMP (p. 122) would be amended as follows for 19 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

LAR-22

Designate existing utility corridors, (including the WUG updates to the Western Regional Corridor Study and west-wide energy corridors designated pursuant to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and studied in an interagency Programmatic EIS) and additional corridors subject to physical barriers and sensitive resource values (Map R-21).

A new east-west aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide is designated south of the Carbon County line between US-191/US-6 and SR-10 to accommodate high voltage transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

For Alternative C, utility corridor decision LAR-22 in the RMP (p. 122) would be amended as follows for 17 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

LAR-22

Designate existing utility corridors, (including the WUG updates to the Western Regional Corridor Study and west-wide energy corridors designated pursuant to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and studied in an interagency Programmatic EIS) and additional corridors subject to physical barriers and sensitive resource values (Map R-21).

A new east-west aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide is designated along CR-401/Green River Cutoff between US-191/US-6 and Castle Dale to accommodate high voltage transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. If future utilities cannot avoid ROW Exclusion Areas designated through the RMP encroaching into the corridor, then relocation of the utility or a plan amendment would be needed.

For Alternative D, utility corridor decision LAR-22 in the RMP (p. 122) would be amended as follows for 3 miles (***new text in bold italics***):

LAR-22

Designate existing utility corridors, (including the WUG updates to the Western Regional Corridor Study and west-wide energy corridors designated pursuant to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and studied in an interagency Programmatic EIS) and additional corridors subject to physical barriers and sensitive resource values (Map R-21).

A new east-west aboveground utility corridor up to 1 mile wide is designated east of US-191 near the Carbon County-Duchesne County line to accommodate high voltage transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

For the Castle Dale Alternative Connector, utility corridor decision LAR-22 in the RMP (p. 122) would be amended as follows for less than 1 mile (***new text in bold italics***):

LAR-22

Designate existing utility corridors, (including the WUG updates to the Western Regional Corridor Study and west-wide energy corridors designated pursuant to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and studied in an interagency Programmatic EIS) and additional corridors subject to physical barriers and sensitive resource values (Map R-21).

The existing utility corridor east of Castle Dale is expanded to accommodate high voltage transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

For Price Alternative Connector, utility corridor decision LAR-22 in the RMP (p. 122) would be amended as follows for less than 1 mile (***new text in bold italics***):

LAR-22

Designate existing utility corridors, (including the WUG updates to the Western Regional Corridor Study and west-wide energy corridors designated pursuant to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and studied in an interagency Programmatic EIS) and additional corridors subject to physical barriers and sensitive resource values (Map R-21).

The existing utility corridor west of Price near SH-122 is expanded to accommodate high voltage transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

4.4.8 BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Alternatives E, F, and the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation traverse small parcels of lands administered by the Salt Lake FO. While Alternatives A and G do not cross BLM-administered land, the routes are adjacent to small isolated parcels. These alternatives are not located within a designated utility corridor when crossing public lands. According to the RMP (RMP ROD, p. 56), “future proposals for major rights-of-way such as pipelines, large power lines and permanent improved roads must use identified corridors. Otherwise, a planning amendment and appropriate environmental analysis will be required. Proposals that are not considered major may be sited outside corridors after demonstrating that locating within a corridor is not viable. In all cases, the utilization of ROW in common shall be considered whenever possible. ROW, whether within or outside a corridor, will avoid the following areas to the maximum extent possible:

- Lands within 0.5 mile of greater sage-grouse strutting grounds if the disturbance would adversely impact the effectiveness of the lek.
- Lands within 1,200 feet of riparian/aquatic habitats.
- Lands within VRM class II and III areas.
- Lands within WSAs.
- Lands where an aboveground ROW would be an obvious visual or physical intrusion such as ridge tops or narrow drainages.
- Lands with slopes greater than 30 percent.
- Lands with known or suspected hazardous materials.”

Alternatives A and G do not cross BLM-administered land in the SLFO, but they are situated adjacent to BLM parcels. These alternatives would be in conformance and not require a plan amendment; however, the BLM requested a plan amendment to designate these areas as a proposed new utility corridor along Alternatives A and G to accommodate other RFFA transmission projects within the FO.

Table 4-9 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Salt Lake FO.

Table 4-9 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Salt Lake FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Salt Lake FO				
A	n/a	None	Proposed new utility corridor	<1 mile
E	2 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	2 miles
F	6 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	6 miles
G (Agency Preferred)	n/a	None	Proposed new utility corridor	<1 mile
Reservation Ridge Alternative Connector	5 miles	Outside RMP-designated corridor	Proposed new utility corridor	5 miles

Proposed plan amendment language for each alternative is provided below.

For Alternatives E, F, and the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation, transportation and utility corridor decisions associated with the RMP (p. 56) would be amended as follows (***new text in bold italics***):

Decision 2

An aboveground utility corridor is designated south of the Ashley National Forest boundary between US-191 and US-6 to accommodate future high-voltage transmission lines.

For Alternatives A and G, transportation and utility corridor decisions associated with the RMP (p. 56) would be amended as follows (***new text in bold italics***):

Decision 2

An aboveground utility corridor is designated along U.S. Highway 89 from the junction of U.S. Highway 6 south to Birdseye to accommodate future high-voltage transmission lines.

4.4.9 BLM Richfield Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, D, E, F, and G traverse lands administered by the Richfield FO. Proposed routes through this area are considered to be in conformance with the RMP. The RMP does not specifically restrict ROWs to designated corridors. According to the LAR-33 (RMP ROD, p. 130), “to minimize adverse environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs, use common ROWs whenever possible, including co-location of new utility transmission lines and other facilities within existing utility and highway corridors.”

Alternatives B, C, and D would not meet resource objectives that establish buffers to protect streams and Alternative C would traverse a wetland. However, these alternatives are situated within utility corridors designated through the RMP and the transmission line can be designed to avoid the water resource buffers and access roads routed to minimize conflict. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required.

Table 4-10 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Richfield FO.

Table 4-10 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Richfield FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Richfield FO				
A	n/a	None	None	n/a
B	n/a	None	None	n/a
C	n/a	None	None	n/a
D	n/a	None	None	n/a
E	n/a	None	None	n/a
F	n/a	None	None	n/a
G (Agency Preferred)	n/a	None	None	n/a

4.4.10 BLM Fillmore Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, D, E, F, and G as well as the Lynndyl and IPP East Alternative Connectors traverse lands administered by the Fillmore FO. Proposed routes through this area are considered to be in conformance with the RMP. The RMP does not specifically restrict ROWs to designated corridors. According to the Warm Springs RMP (Warm Springs ROD, p.40), “new ROW will be restricted to designated corridors wherever feasible. Special management designation areas and VRM Class II areas are ROW avoidance areas.” According to the House Range RMP, (House Range ROD, p. 67), “Section 503 of FLPMA states ‘...utilization of ROW in common shall be required to the extent practical...’ The utilization of existing corridors, whether designated or not, will be standard procedure.”

The point where Alternatives A, D, E, F, and G converge with US-6 south of Jericho would not be able to meet current visual resource objectives. However, this area is within a utility corridor designated through WWEC, and exceptions to visual resource conflicts could be granted if mitigation and avoidance is not feasible. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required.

Table 4-11 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Fillmore FO.

Table 4-11 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Fillmore FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Fillmore FO				
A	n/a	None	None	n/a
B	n/a	None	None	n/a
C	n/a	None	None	n/a
D (Agency Preferred in Region III)	n/a	None	None	n/a
E	n/a	None	None	n/a
F	n/a	None	None	n/a
G (Agency Preferred in Region II)	n/a	None	None	n/a
Lynndyl Alternative Connector	n/a	None	None	n/a
IPP East Alternative Connector	n/a	None	None	n/a
S. Terminal Near IPP (Design Option 2)	n/a	None	None	n/a
Substation Near IPP (Design Option 3)	n/a	None	None	n/a
Delta Ground Electrode (Design Option 2)	n/a	None	None	n/a

4.4.11 BLM Cedar City Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, and D as well as the Avon Alternative Connector and northern portions of the Pinto Alternative Variation traverse lands administered by the Cedar City FO. Proposed routes through this area are considered to be in conformance with the RMP. The RMP does not specifically restrict ROWs to designated corridors. According to the RMP (RMP ROD, p. 6), “encourage, to the maximum extent practicable, the location of new major ROW within designated corridors.”

The point where Alternatives B and C diverge at the state line would not be able to meet current resource objectives. However, the BLM has determined that a plan amendment would not be required, but visual resource mitigation and avoidance would be used to the extent practical to minimize the conflict.

Table 4-12 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Cedar City FO.

Table 4-12 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Cedar City FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Cedar City FO				
A	n/a	None	None	n/a
B	n/a	None	None	n/a
C	n/a	None	None	n/a
D (Agency Preferred)	n/a	None	None	n/a
Avon Alternative Connector	n/a	None	None	n/a
Pinto Alternative Connector	n/a	None	None	n/a

4.4.12 BLM St. George Field Office

Alternative A and the southern portion of the Pinto Alternative Variation traverse lands administered by the St. George FO. These alternatives are situated within utility corridors designated by WWEC or the RMP. According to the RMP decision LD-12 (RMP ROD, p. 2.3), applications for new ROW on public lands will be considered and analyzed on a case-by-case basis. Proposals will be reviewed for consistency with planning decisions and evaluated under requirements of the NEPA and other applicable laws for resource protection. Mitigation needed to avoid adverse impacts will be integrated into project proposals and, where appropriate, alternatives identified to further reduce environmental impacts to lands, resources, or adjacent land uses. New utility lines and long-distance transmission lines will be designed and located so as to reduce visual impacts to travelers along I-15 and visually sensitive highways in the county.

Alternative A traverses areas considered to be Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat; however, the alignment would be located within the designated utility corridor and resource mitigation and avoidance would be used to the extent practical to minimize the conflict. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be needed.

Table 4-13 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the St. George FO.

Table 4-13 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the St. George FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
St. George FO				
A	n/a	None	None	n/a
Pinto Alternative Connector	n/a	None	None	n/a

4.4.13 BLM Caliente Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, and D traverse the Caliente FO and mostly follow utility corridors designated through WVEC or the RMP. According to the RMP (RMP ROD, p. 65), “ROW and other land uses are recognized as major uses of the public lands and are authorized pursuant to Sections 302 and 501 of FLPMA. Section 503 of the FLPMA provides for the designation of utility corridors and encourages utilization of ROW in-common to minimize environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROW. It is BLM policy to encourage prospective applicants to locate their proposals within corridors. Only facilities and uses that are consistent with the special designation associated with that area will be permitted in avoidance areas. Designation of exclusion zones—those areas where no new ROW will be allowed—will provide protection of lands and resources with values that are not compatible with ROW or other land uses.”

Portions of Alternatives A, B, C, and D would not be able to meet current resource objectives in some areas. In addition, Alternatives A, B, and D traverse a ROW exclusion area associated with an ACEC, and a plan amendment would be required to allow the project to cross a small portion of the ROW exclusion area located adjacent to the designated utility corridor.

Table 4-14 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Caliente FO.

Table 4-14 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Caliente FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Caliente FO				
A	1 mile	Crossing ROW exclusion area and VRM II area associated with ACEC	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	1 mile
B	1 mile	Crossing ROW exclusion area and VRM II area associated with ACEC	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	1 mile
C	6 miles	Crossing VRM Class II	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	6 miles
D (Agency Preferred)	1 mile	Crossing ROW exclusion area and VRM II area associated with ACEC	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	1 mile

Proposed plan amendment language for each alternative is provided below.

For Alternatives A, B, and D, Map 23 and Table 26 (p. 116 and 119) associated with RMP decision SD-3 would be amended as follows for 1 mile (***new text in bold italics, including a new footnote***):

Table 26 (Excerpt from Ely District Office RMP
Management Prescriptions for ACECs

Mormon Mesa (109,680 acres)	
Management Activities	Management Prescriptions for ACECs
Land Use Authorization	Limited ⁹ /avoidance ² /exclusion area ¹⁵

¹⁵ ***A one-time exception is granted to accommodate one high-voltage transmission line through the ROW exclusion area adjacent to the existing utility corridor through the Mormon Mesa ACEC.***

For Alternative C, the plan would be amended to add a new decision for visual resources (p.64) as follows:

VR-5: A one-time exception is granted to accommodate one high-voltage transmission line through approximately 6 miles of VRM Class II outside of a utility corridor north of Caliente.

4.4.14 BLM Las Vegas Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, D, and the Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector would not meet resource objectives as noted below; however, routes through this area are considered to be in conformance with the RMP.

Alternatives A, B, and D would not meet resource objectives that establish buffers related to protections for water resources and current visual resource objectives. Alternative C also would not meet current resource objectives. The transmission line can be designed to avoid the water resource buffers and access roads routed to minimize conflict. In addition, these alternatives are situated within utility corridors designated through WWEC and the RMP, and exceptions to visual resource conflicts could be granted if mitigation and avoidance is not feasible. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required for Alternatives A, B, C, and D.

Alternative A would cross the Muddy River and Alternative B would cross both the Muddy River and Meadow Valley Wash. These rivers were determined to be eligible for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River system with tentative classifications of recreational for the Muddy River and scenic for Meadow Valley Wash. However, since these rivers are not addressed in the current RMP, a plan amendment would not be required.

Alternative A and the Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector would pass through the former Sunrise Mountain ISA, which was released by Congress from further wilderness consideration and study in the 2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act (H.R. 3547-309, Sec. 115 (a)). The area is now managed as a ROW avoidance area associated with the Rainbow Gardens ACEC. The TransWest Project is proposed to traverse the area within a designated utility corridor.

Table 4-15 identifies areas of non-conformance and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Las Vegas FO.

Table 4-15 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Las Vegas FO

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Las Vegas FO				
A (Agency Preferred)	n/a	None	None	n/a
B	n/a	None	None	n/a
C	n/a	None	None	n/a
D	n/a	None	None	n/a
Marketplace Alternative Connector	n/a	None	None	n/a
Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector	n/a	None	None	n/a
Lake Las Vegas Alternative Connector	n/a	None	None	n/a
Three Kids Mine Alternative Connector	n/a	None	None	n/a
River Mountains Alternative Connector	n/a	None	None	n/a
Railroad Pass Alternative Connector	n/a	None	None	n/a
Southern Terminal	n/a	None	None	n/a
Southern Terminal Alternative	n/a	None	None	n/a
Mormon Mesa-Carp Elgin Road Ground Electrode	n/a	None	None	n/a
Halfway Wash-Virgin River Ground Electrode	n/a	None	None	n/a
Halfway Wash East Ground Electrode	n/a	None	None	n/a
Meadow Valley 2 Ground Electrode	n/a	None	None	n/a

4.4.15 USFS Ashley National Forest

Alternatives D, E, and F and the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation pass through the Ashley National Forest. A summary of the consistency review of the project in relation to the LRMP standard and guidelines for each alternative is provided below. The detailed consistency worksheets are contained in the Project Record.

Alternatives D and F would cross a small (<3 acre) area on the southeast corner of the Ashley National Forest, which includes Management Areas (MAs) D, E, and N. Due to the alignment location in the Bad Land Cliffs area, sparse vegetation along the ROW, and proposed mitigation measures, Alternatives D and F would be consistent with standards and guidelines and would not require a plan amendment.

Alternative E passes through the Sowers Canyon South Unit planning utility window and would cross MAs D, F, and N. The Sowers Canyon evaluation contained in the LRMP concluded that there was no land use plan conflict and that all conflicts with resource values could be mitigated. Standards and guidelines for lands in the LRMP (p. IV-48), states that “future energy transmission corridors will be in conformance with corridor plan in accordance with Appendix H of the [Final EIS associated with the LRMP]” (applies to all management areas). In Appendix H of the Final EIS associated with the LRMP, the South Unit Window was recommended for designation and was considered suitable for overhead electrical transmission line facilities (p. H-32 and H-41). Due to its proximity to an existing transmission line and location within a utility window, Alternative E would be consistent with standards and guidelines and would not require a plan amendment.

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation traverses the southern boundary of the Ashley National Forest and would cross MAs D, F, and N. The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation crosses retention and partial retention VQO areas in MAs D, N and F in the immediate foreground of the Reservation Ridge Scenic Backway and would not meet retention visual management objectives.

Although there are other alternatives in the area being analyzed, this alignment cannot be relocated to avoid crossing these areas. In addition, the long-term presence of the transmission line and associated vegetation maintenance would not allow for acceptable levels of rehabilitation. Even with project mitigations applied, the ROW clearing would not meet the retention and partial retention VQO. This alternative variation would not be consistent with the retention and partial retention VQO per Recreation (p. IV-14) Objectives 9 and 10, and a project-specific amendment would be required for this alignment.

Table 4-16 identifies areas not consistent with the LRMP and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Ashley National Forest. Since proposed amendments would be specifically for this Project, the impacts associated with the amendment are disclosed in the project impacts discussed in Chapters 3.0 and 5.0.

Table 4-16 Areas Not Consistent and Amendments Proposed in the Ashley National Forest

Alternative	Areas Not Consistent		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Ashley National Forest				
D	n/a	None	None	n/a
E	n/a	None	None	n/a
F	n/a	None	None	n/a
Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation	10 miles	Inconsistent with Retention and Partial Retention VQO	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	10 miles

For the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation, the plan would be amended to add a new decision for Recreation Objectives 9 and 10 (p. IV-19) as follows:

The Transwest Express Project as approved through the USFS ROD is allowed.

4.4.16 USFS Uinta National Forest Planning Area

Alternatives A, E, F, G, and the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation pass through the Uinta National Forest Planning Area. A summary of the consistency review of the project in relation to the LRMP standard and guidelines for each alternative is provided below. The detailed consistency worksheets are contained in the Project Record.

Alternatives A and G cross the following MAs: Diamond Fork, Strawberry Reservoir, Thistle, Upper Spanish Fork Canyon, Willow Creek, Nephi and Mona. Alternatives E and F cross the Thistle, Upper Spanish Fork Canyon, Nephi, and White River MAs. Alternative F also would cross the Mona MA. The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation crosses the White River MA.

The potential disturbance area for Alternatives A, E, F, and G occurs adjacent to the Nephi MA north of Salt Creek near steep retention VQO and partial retention VQO. However, these alternatives would not cross the Nephi MA and would be situated near existing transmission lines and in an existing utility corridor where they are situated near the Nephi MA north of Salt Creek; therefore, the project would be consistent with the area visual objectives.

Alternatives A and G would use the Deseret Corridor and Alternatives E and F would use the Spanish Fork Canyon corridor. Although all alternatives cross the Uinta National Forest Planning Area in or adjacent to existing utility corridors designated by WWEC or the LRMP, the MP-8.2-4 standard limits use of existing utility corridors to currently permitted power transmission facilities where only additions or upgrades to the existing facilities would be accommodated. In addition, Alternatives A and G would

deviate from the existing utility corridor and cross the Willow Creek MA where the desired condition is to limit the utility corridor to existing ROW. A project-specific amendment would be required for all alternatives that cross the Uinta National Forest Planning Area to address consistency with standard MP-8.2-4 and the future desired condition of the Willow Creek MA.

Table 4-17 identifies areas not consistent with the LRMP and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Uinta National Forest Planning Area. Since proposed amendments would be specifically for this Project, the impacts associated with the amendment are disclosed in the project impacts discussed in Chapters 3.0 and 5.0.

Table 4-17 Areas Not Consistent and Amendments Proposed in the Uinta National Forest Planning Area

Alternative	Areas Not Consistent		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Uinta National Forest Planning Area				
A	20 miles	Inconsistent with VQO, and utility corridor standard MP-8.2-4 and desired future condition of affected MAs	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	20 miles
E	12 miles	Inconsistent with VQO, and utility corridor standard MP-8.2-4 and desired future condition of affected MAs	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	12 miles
F	12 miles	Inconsistent with VQO, and utility corridor standard MP-8.2-4 and desired future condition of affected MAs	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	12 miles
G (Agency Preferred)	20 miles	Inconsistent with VQO, and utility corridor standard MP-8.2-4 and desired future condition of affected MAs	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	20 miles
Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation	3 miles	Inconsistent with VQO, and utility corridor standard MP-8.2-4 and desired future condition of affected MAs	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	3 miles

For the Alternatives A, E, F, G, and the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation, MP-8.2-4 Standard in the plan (p.3-49) would be amended as follows (***new text in bold italics***):

MP-8.2-4 Standard: The following limitations for power lines, water transmission lines, fiber optic lines, and gas pipeline corridors will be applied. ***The Transwest Express Project as approved through the USFS ROD is allowed.***

For the Alternatives A, E, F, G, and the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation, desired future conditions would be amended in Chapter 5: Management Area Descriptions and Desired Future Conditions (DFCs) for each of the following areas: Diamond Fork, Strawberry Reservoir, Thistle, Upper Spanish Fork Canyon, Willow Creek, Nephi, Mona, and White River. The amendment for each management area would be (***new text in bold italics***):

The Transwest Express Project as approved through the USFS ROD is allowed.

4.4.17 USFS Manti-La Sal National Forest

Alternatives A, B, D, E, F, and G pass through the Manti-La Sal National Forest. A summary of the consistency review of the project in relation to the LRMP standard and guidelines for each alternative is provided below. The detailed consistency worksheets are contained in the Project Record.

Alternatives A, E, F, and G would cross three management units in the Manti-La Sal National Forest: GWR, KWR and RNG. All of these alternatives would be co-located with existing transmission lines and would be consistent with the standards and guidelines.

Alternative B would cross seven management units: GWR, DRS, MMA, RNG, UC, TBR, and WPE. The portion of Alternative B that crosses the DRS and TBR management units in areas of area of partial retention VQO outside the designated utility corridor would not be consistent with Visual Resource Management (A04) (p. III-17). In addition, the portion of the route crossing the Indian creek campground road in the DRS unit would not meet current management objectives. A project-specific amendment would be required where this alignment crosses these management units.

Alternative D would cross eight management units: RNG, UC, TBR, DRS, GWR, SLD, RPI, and UDM. Alternative D, an alignment where there are no existing utilities, would cross only partial retention VQO areas and would not be consistent with Visual Resource Management (A04) (p. III-17) in the following management units: DRS, GWR, RNG, and TBR. In addition, Alternative D includes less than one acre of disturbance within the Gooseberry campground and Flat Canyon campground in the DRS unit, which would not meet current management objectives. A project-specific amendment would be required where this alignment crosses these management units.

Table 4-18 identifies areas not consistent with the LRMP and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Manti-La Sal National Forest. Since proposed amendments would be specifically for this Project, the impacts associated with the amendment are disclosed in the project impacts discussed in Chapters 3 and 5.

Table 4-18 Areas Not Consistent and Amendments Proposed in the Manti-La Sal National Forest

Alternative	Areas Not Consistent		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Manti-La Sal National Forest				
A	n/a	None	None	n/a
B	<1 mile	Inconsistent with Partial Retention VQO	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	<1 mile
D	10 miles	Inconsistent with Partial Retention VQO	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	10 miles
E	n/a	None	None	n/a
F	n/a	None	None	n/a
G (Agency Preferred)	n/a	None	None	n/a

For the Alternatives B and D, Visual Resource Management (A04) (p. III-17) in the plan would be amended as follows (*new text in bold italics*):

The Transwest Express Project as approved through the USFS ROD is allowed.

4.4.18 USFS Fishlake National Forest

Alternatives B and C pass through the Fishlake National Forest. According to the LRMP (Appendix G, p. G-8), “there are no areas on the Fishlake National Forest with legislation prohibiting transmission facilities.” A summary of the consistency review of the project in relation to the LRMP standard and guidelines for each alternative is provided below. The detailed consistency worksheets are contained in the Project Record.

Alternative B would cross MA 6B within a utility corridor (the Lynndyl to Mona utility corridor) paralleling two existing transmission lines where structures do not line up with each other and crosses the forest along an existing road in a tree-less area. Alternative B would be consistent with standards and guidelines.

Alternative C would cross MAs 2B, 4A, 4B, 5A, and 6B. Alternative C would not be consistent with visual management objectives per Visual Resource Management (A04) (p. IV-12) in portions of MAs 4A, 6B, and 5A. Alternative C crosses both high and moderate SIO landscapes in areas not parallel to existing transmission lines in the western MA 4B (in the vicinity of Browns Hole) and would not be consistent with visual objectives. In addition, any new access roads outside of the utility corridor in the eastern MA 4B and MA 6B area would not be consistent with high SIO visual objectives and would require a plan amendment. Alternative C also intersects two areas in MA 5A along Gooseberry Road and over Black Mountain that would not be consistent with visual management objectives. A plan amendment would be required to allow for the project in these areas.

Table 4-19 identifies areas not consistent with the LRMP and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Fishlake National Forest. Since proposed amendments would be specifically for this Project, the impacts associated with the amendment are disclosed in the project impacts discussed in Chapters 3 and 5.

Table 4-19 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Fishlake National Forest

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Fishlake National Forest				
B	n/a	None	None	n/a
C	14 miles	Inconsistent with high and moderate SIO landscapes	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	14 miles

For the Alternative C, Visual Resource Management (A04) (p. IV-12) in the plan would be amended as follows (*new text in bold italics*):

The Transwest Express Project as approved through the USFS ROD is allowed.

4.4.19 USFS Dixie National Forest

Alternative A as well as the Ox Valley East, Ox Valley West, and Pinto Alternative Variations pass through the Dixie National Forest. A summary of the consistency review of the project in relation to the LRMP standard and guidelines for each alternative is provided below. The detailed consistency worksheets are contained in the Project Record.

Alternative A crosses MAs 2B, 4C, 5A, and 6A. Alternative A closely parallels four existing transmission lines within a WWEC utility corridor and proposed mitigation would reduce impacts to the extent feasible. This alternative would be consistent with standards and guidelines established for the area.

The Ox Valley East and West Alternative Variations cross MAs 2B, 5A, 6A, and 10B. The majority of the Ox Valley East and West Alternative Variations are in high SIO and would not be consistent with visual management objectives in these management areas per Visual Resources Management (A04) (IV-26). A plan amendment would be required to allow for the project in these areas.

The Pinto Alternative Variation crosses MAs 2B, 4C, 5A, 6A, 9A, and 10B. The majority of the Pinto Alternative Variation are in high SIO and would not be consistent with visual management objectives per Visual Resources Management (A04) (p. IV-26). The variation would only be consistent with visual management objectives MA 4C. A plan amendment would be required to allow for the project in these areas.

Table 4-20 identifies areas not consistent with the LRMP and the proposed plan amendments by alternative through the Dixie National Forest. Since proposed amendments would be specifically for this Project, the impacts associated with the amendment are disclosed in the project impacts discussed in Chapters 3 and 5.

Table 4-20 Areas of Non-Conformance and Amendments Proposed in the Dixie National Forest

Alternative	Areas of Non-Conformance		Amendments Proposed	
	Length	Reason	Proposed Amendment	Length
Dixie National Forest				
A	n/a	None	None	n/a
Ox Valley East Alternative Variation	15 miles	Inconsistent with high SIO landscapes	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	15 miles
Ox Valley West Alternative Variation	14 miles	Inconsistent with high SIO landscapes	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	14 miles
Pinto Alternative Variation	20 miles	Inconsistent with high SIO landscapes	One-time exception to allow one high-voltage transmission line	20 miles

For the Ox Valley East and West and Pinto Alternative Variations, Visual Resources Management (A04) (p. IV-26) in the plan would be amended as follows (***new text in bold italics***):

The Transwest Express Project as approved through the USFS ROD is allowed.

4.5 Analysis of Environmental Impacts and Planning Implications from Proposed Plan Amendments

This section presents an analysis of the environmental impacts and planning implications that would be associated with approval of the land use plan amendments, as described in the previous sections. Pursuant to federal regulations, this analysis is limited to the portions of the land use plans being considered for amendment.

Under all alternatives, plan amendments for the following BLM FOs would not be needed: Grand Junction, Moab, Richfield, Fillmore, Cedar City, St. George, and Las Vegas. Depending on the alternative, plan amendments would be needed for all National Forests affected by the Project. The analysis for plan amendments needed by alternative for each BLM FO is presented in the following sections. Analysis of the project-specific amendments for national forests is addressed in Chapters 3.0 and 5.0 as part of the project analysis and will not be further discussed in this section.

4.5.1 Climate and Air Quality

There would be little or no impacts on air resources from plan amendment decisions. Plan amendments to create new or expand existing utility corridors would influence the ability to locate utilities in areas. These actions in turn would have direct impacts on air resources, which would be analyzed pursuant to NEPA process as individual projects are proposed. Consistency with current air quality regulations in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, or Nevada would need to be assessed as future projects are proposed along with the potential for individual projects to exceed applicable state or federal air quality standards and meet conformity requirements. Section 3.1 provides a detailed description of impacts to air resources within the corridors proposed as a result of this Project. All proposed plan amendments associated with this Project would have minor and inconsequential effects because the areas are in attainment for air quality related values.

4.5.2 Geological, Paleontological, and Mineral Resources

Section 3.2 provides a detailed description of impacts to geological, paleontological, and mineral resources within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.2.1 Paleontological Resources

There would be little or no impacts on paleontological resources from plan amendment decisions. Plan amendments to create new utility or expand existing corridors would influence the ability to locate utilities in areas. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. These actions in turn have direct impacts on paleontological resources, which are analyzed pursuant to NEPA as individual projects are proposed. Allowing for potential future utilities to be developed in areas where currently none exist could increase the likelihood of unanticipated subsurface discoveries. Any development activities in the proximity of areas with high PFYC could degrade the value of a site. Impacts to paleontological resources would be assessed as future projects are proposed. Section 3.2 provides a detailed description of impacts to paleontological resources within the corridors proposed as a result of this Project.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of paleontological resources in the respective FOs is discussed below. The quantification of the acreage of PFYC 5 areas provide the context for the level of potential disturbance of important fossil bearing formations.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Expanding an existing and creating a new utility corridor for a length of 78 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. A total of 17,446 acres of PFYC 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The only outstanding fossil resource in the area is Dinosaur National Monument, located a few miles east of Vernal, Utah. The majority of the 36 miles of proposed new utility corridor overlaps category 3 (moderate or unknown potential) and 4 (very high potential) PFYC areas; however, there is some overlap with PFYC 2 (low potential) areas. A total of 7,466 acres of PFYC 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

The proposed new utility corridor for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 3 of less than 1 mile would overlap with 24 acres of PFYC 5 areas. The proposed new utility corridor for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 4 of 2 miles would overlap with 262 acres of PFYC 5 areas.

BLM Vernal Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Expanding an existing and designating a proposed new utility corridor for a length of 28 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. A total of 7,248 acres of PFYC 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Creating a proposed new utility corridor for less than a mile would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. The RMP does not specifically address paleontological resources; therefore, it is assumed that the corridor would not compromise the integrity of known paleontological resources within the field office. A total of 68 acres of PFYC 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Caliente Field Office

There are no important fossil bearing formations in the area and there would be no overlap with PFYC 5 areas in the area that would be amended to allow an exception through a 1.0 mile ROW Exclusion Area and VRM II area.

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of paleontological resource in the respective FOs is discussed below. The quantification of the acreage of PFYC 5 areas provide the context for the level of potential disturbance of important fossil bearing formations.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Effects of designating 81 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 25,010 acres of PFYC 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Expanding and converting an existing utility corridor for 44 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. A total of 7,652 acres of PFYC 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Effects of designating 7 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 929 acres of PFYC 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Price Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area and an outstanding fossil resource in the area at Cleveland Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry, located a few miles south of the utility corridor. Designating a new utility corridor for 19 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. A total of 175 acres of PFYC 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of paleontological resources in the respective BLM offices is discussed below. The quantification of the acreage of PFYC 5 areas provide the context for the level of potential disturbance of important fossil bearing formations.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Effects for the 63 miles of a newly designated utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 4,519 acres of Potential Fossil Yield Class 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Effects for the 6 miles of a newly designated utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 818 acres of PFYC 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

PFYCPFYCBLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Designating a new utility corridor for 17 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. A total of 796 acres of PFYC 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Caliente Field Office

There are few important fossil bearing formations in the area; however, there would be no overlap with PFYC 5 areas in the area that would be amended to allow an exception totaling 6 miles through the VRM Class II area north of Caliente.

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of paleontological resources in the respective BLM offices is discussed below. The quantification of the acreage of PFYC 5 areas provide the context for the level of potential disturbance of important fossil bearing formations.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Effects for the 92 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 24,174 acres of PFYC 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Effects of designating 49 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 11,903 acres of PFYC 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Price Field Office

Designating a new utility corridor for 3 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. A total of 738 acres of PFYC 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The 1-mile area proposed to allow for a one-time exception through a ROW exclusion area would not overlap with any PFYC 5 areas.

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendment would have on the management of paleontological resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below. The quantification of the acreage of PFYC 5 areas provide the context for the level of potential disturbance of important fossil bearing formations.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Effects of designating 19 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described under Alternative A. A total of 1,463 acres of PFYC 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

Salt Lake Field Office

Effects of designating a 2-mile of new utility corridor would be similar to those described under Alternative A. A total of 68 acres of PFYC 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on the management of paleontological resources

in the respective BLM office is discussed below. The quantification of the acreage of PFYC 5 areas provide the context for the level of potential disturbance of important fossil bearing formations.

BLM Vernal Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Effects of designating 55 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described under Alternative A. A total of 13,029 acres of PFYC 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Effects of designating 6 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described under Alternative A. A total of 1,307 acres of PFYC 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price Alternative Connectors would require a plan amendment of less than 1 mile each. There are a few important fossil bearing formations in the area; however, there would be no overlap with PFYC 5 areas from a newly designated utility corridor of less than 1 mile each.

Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on the management of paleontological resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below. The quantification of the acreage of PFYC 5 areas provide the context for the level of potential disturbance of important fossil bearing formations.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Effects of designating 3 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described under Alternative A. A total of 323 acres of PFYC 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Effects of designating 5 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described under Alternative A. A total of 1,241 acres of PFYC 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

4.5.2.2 Mineral Resources

Allowing for potential future development of utilities in areas where currently none exist could affect the management of mineral resources. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. A potential impact would be the loss of access to mineral resources and prevention of the mineral owner (including governmental entities) to develop minerals. Where the corridor is co-located with existing utility or transportation routes, utilities would be sited in attempt to minimize impacts on access to and development of mineral resources. However, siting around and through active oil and gas fields can become problematic in areas of dense well development, which can affect maintenance/drilling activities.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the mineral resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the mileage of the amendments through areas leased for mineral development and active operations provide the context for the level of risk of potential siting conflicts.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 78 miles of newly designated utility corridor would pass through areas leased for mineral development and active operations. The utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations and minor constraints as well as some areas of major constraints for fluid minerals. There are mineral withdrawal areas south of I-80. The remaining land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with minor constraints. The land within the 36 miles of newly designated utility corridor would be available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity.

There is no mineral activity in the vicinity of Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 or 4; therefore, impacts would not be anticipated.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The FO is entirely contained within the Uinta Basin, which is known nationally for oil and gas production. The Vernal RMP and ROD prioritize the development of mineral resources while protecting other valuable natural resources. The 28 miles of newly designated utility corridor would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals, and 72 acres of the corridor is currently developed with oil and gas. The land within the new areas of utility corridor is available for other minerals.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The proposed utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity.

BLM Caliente Field Office

There is no mineral activity in the area proposed for a plan amendment. Therefore, impacts would be minimal.

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the mineral resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the mileage of the amendments through areas leased for mineral development and active operations provide the context for the level of risk of potential siting conflicts.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 81 miles of newly designated utility corridor would pass through areas leased for mineral development and active operations.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

The 44 miles of newly designated utility corridor would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations and minor constraints for fluid minerals. There are no other mineral resources affected.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 7 miles of newly designated utility corridor would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals, and 4 acres of the corridor is currently developed with oil and gas.

BLM Price Field Office

The 19 miles of newly designated utility corridor would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the mineral resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the mileage of the amendments through areas leased for mineral development and active operations provide the context for the level of risk of potential siting conflicts.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 63 miles of newly designated utility corridor would include areas leased for mineral development and active operations. The utility corridor would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations and minor constraints as well as some areas of major constraints.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 6 miles of newly designated utility corridor would traverse areas open to leasing with minor constraints for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as described for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as described for Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

The 17 miles of newly designated utility corridor would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations. Effects would be similar to those discussed under Alternative A.

BLM Caliente Field Office

There is no mineral activity area proposed for a plan amendment therefore, impacts would not be anticipated.

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the mineral resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the mileage of the amendments through areas leased for mineral development and active operations provide the context for the level of risk of potential siting conflicts.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 92 miles of newly designated utility corridor would include areas leased for mineral development and active operations. The utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations and minor constraints as well as some areas of major constraints.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 49 miles of newly designated utility corridor would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals, and 134 acres of the corridor is currently developed with oil and gas. The land within the utility corridor is available for other mineral activity; however, there is no active mineral activity.

BLM Price Field Office

The 3 miles of newly designated utility corridor may include areas leased for mineral development and active operations. The utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations and minor constraints as well as some areas of major constraints.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the mineral resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the mileage of the amendments through areas leased for mineral development and active operations provide the context for the level of risk of potential siting conflicts.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 19 miles of newly designated utility corridor would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals, and 39 acres of the corridor is currently developed with oil and gas. The

land within the utility corridor is available for other mineral activity; however, there is no active mineral activity.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 2 miles of newly designated utility corridor would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity.

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the mineral resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the mileage of the amendments through areas leased for mineral development and active operations provide the context for the level of risk of potential siting conflicts.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 55 miles of newly designated utility corridor would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals, and 134 acres of the corridor is currently developed with oil and gas. The land within the utility corridor is available for other mineral activity; however, there is no active mineral activity.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 6 miles of newly designated utility corridor would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity.

Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price Alternative Connectors would require a plan amendment in the Price FO for less than 1 mile each. Both connectors would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource.

Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the mineral resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the mileage of the amendments through areas leased for mineral development and active operations provide the context for the level of risk of potential siting conflicts.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 3 miles of newly designated utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 5 miles of newly designated utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would traverse areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity.

4.5.3 Soil Resources

No direct effect would occur to soil resources from plan amendments; however, effects could occur from changes to land management that would allow and/or encourage new utility project development such as the establishment of new designated or expanded utility corridors. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Development of additional utility projects within new utility corridors or development of additional ROWs would result in direct and indirect impacts to soil resources. Impacts could occur from short-term increases of erosion rates within disturbed areas, potential creation of unstable soil conditions at excavated areas, and soil contamination from leaks and spills. Impacts also could occur from short-term increases in upland erosion. While concentrating utilities in areas could result in increased levels of erosion, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects would minimize the extent of this effect. In addition, concentrating utility development with designated corridors also could protect areas with more sensitive resources. These impacts would be analyzed on a project-by-project basis, and are discussed in detail for the Project in Section 3.3, Soils, of this EIS.

4.5.3.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the soil resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of sensitive soils (highly erodible, subject to compaction, or prime farmland) impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of soil erosion and/or loss.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 78 miles of newly designated utility corridor would pass through areas with sensitive soils. The amended area would overlap with 22,793 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 21,741 acres that are designated as prone to compaction.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 36 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 5,571 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 7,848 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 710 acres of prime farmland.

The new utility corridor for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 3 of less than 1 mile would overlap with 23 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 24 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 1 acre of prime farmland. The new utility corridor for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 4 of 2 miles would overlap with 267 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 362 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 1 acre of prime farmland.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 28 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 5,595 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 7,248 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 424 acres of prime farmland.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The new utility corridor of less than 1 mile would overlap with 67 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 69 acres that are designated as prone to compaction.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The less than 1 mile of area amended to allow an exception through a ROW Exclusion Area would overlap with 57 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and prone to compaction.

4.5.3.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the soil resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of sensitive soils (highly erodible, subject to compaction, or prime farmland) impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of soil erosion and/or loss.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 81 miles of newly designated utility corridor would pass through areas with sensitive soils. The amended area would overlap with 23,539 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 22,566 acres that are designated as prone to compaction.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

The 44 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 2,093 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 7,517 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 342 acres of prime farmland.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 7 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 1,262 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 1,296 acres of soil designated as prone to compaction.

BLM Price Field Office

The 19 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 436 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 1,301 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 63 acres of prime farmland.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.3.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the soil resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of sensitive soils (highly erodible, subject to

compaction, or prime farmland) impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of soil erosion and/or loss.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 63 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would pass through areas with sensitive soils. The amended area would overlap with 7,262 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 18,542 acres that are designated as prone to compaction.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 6 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 913 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 865 acres that are designated as prone to compaction.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

The 17 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 447 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 2,245 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 44 acres of prime farmland.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The 6 miles of the amended area to allow an exception through a VRM Class II area would overlap with 424 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 316 acres of soil designated as compaction prone, and 52 acres of prime farmland.

4.5.3.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the soil resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of sensitive soils (highly erodible, subject to compaction, or prime farmland) impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of soil erosion and/or loss.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 92 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would pass through areas with sensitive soils. The amended area would overlap with 24,134 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 27,802 acres that are designated as prone to compaction.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 49 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 8,615 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 13,007 acres designated as prone to compaction.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in increased levels of erosion; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect.

BLM Price Field Office

The 3 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with less than 679 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 794 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 67 acres of prime farmland.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

4.5.3.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the soil resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of sensitive soils (highly erodible, subject to compaction, or prime farmland) impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of soil erosion and/or loss.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 19 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 940 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 3,095 acres designated as prone to compaction, and 224 acres of prime farmland.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The newly designated 2-mile utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 186 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 189 acres designated as prone to compaction.

4.5.3.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the soil resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of sensitive soils (highly erodible, subject to compaction, or prime farmland) impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of soil erosion and/or loss.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 55 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 8,548 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 14,147 acres designated as prone to compaction.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 6 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 67 acres of highly erodible soil and 1,310 acres designated as prone to compaction.

4.5.3.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.3.8 Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price Alternative Connectors would require plan amendments in the Price FO for a combined total of less than 1 mile of newly designated utility corridors. The Castle Dale Alternative Connector amendment would overlap with 5 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 7 acres designated as compaction prone. The Price Alternative Connector amendment would overlap with 97 acres of soil designated as compaction prone and 45 acres of prime farmland. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource.

4.5.3.9 Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the soil resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of sensitive soils (highly erodible, subject to compaction, or prime farmland) impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of soil erosion and/or loss.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 3 miles of newly designated utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 323 acres of soil designated as prone to compaction.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 5 miles of newly designated utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 1,241 acres of soil designated as prone to compaction.

4.5.4 Water Resources

No direct effect would occur to water resources from plan amendments; however, effects could occur from changes to land management that would allow and/or encourage new utility project development such as the establishment of new designated or expanded utility corridors. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Development of additional utility projects within new utility corridors or development of additional ROWs would result in direct and indirect impacts to water resources. Impacts could occur from short-term increases of erosion rates within disturbed areas, potential creation of unstable soil conditions at excavated areas, increased suspended sediment concentrations below access road stream crossings,

and water contamination from leaks and spills. Impacts also could occur from short-term increases from upland erosion contributing to suspended solids concentrations and sedimentation issues in streams. Application of best management practices, design features, and mitigation during siting and construction could minimize impacts to water resources when permitting a linear project in a designated corridor. These impacts would be analyzed on a project-by-project basis, and are discussed in detail for the Project in Section 3.4, Water Resources, of this EIS. Waterbodies crossed by each of the Alternatives is provided in **Appendix F**.

4.5.4.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the water resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of miles of overlap with streams and waterbodies impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to water resources from erosion and contamination from spills or equipment leaks.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 78 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 98 miles of intermittent streams and 15 acres of waterbodies.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 36 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with perennial and intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 30 miles of intermittent streams and less than 1 acre of waterbodies.

The new utility corridor for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 3 of less than 1 mile would not overlap with streams or waterbodies. The new utility corridor for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 4 of 2 miles would overlap with 2 miles of intermittent streams.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 28 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 28 miles of intermittent streams and 2 acres of waterbodies.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The newly designated utility corridor of less than one mile that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with less than 1 mile of intermittent streams.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The less than 1 mile of exception through a ROW Exclusion Area would cross less than 1 mile of intermittent streams.

4.5.4.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the water resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of miles of overlap with streams and waterbodies impacted by the

amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to water resources from erosion and contamination from spills or equipment leaks.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 81 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 104 miles of intermittent streams and 151 acres of waterbodies.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

The 44 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with perennial and intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with less than 1 mile of perennial streams, 26 miles of intermittent streams, and 1 acre of waterbodies.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 7 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with 8 miles of intermittent streams.

BLM Price Field Office

The 19 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with perennial and intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with less than 1 mile of perennial streams, 4 miles of intermittent streams, and less than 1 acre of waterbodies.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.4.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the water resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of miles of overlap with streams and waterbodies impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to water resources from erosion and contamination from spills or equipment leaks.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 63 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with perennial and intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 5 miles of perennial streams, 61 miles of intermittent streams, and 8 acres of waterbodies. Exceptions to surface water buffers may need to be granted if avoidance or minimization is not possible when siting utilities; however, overhead structures can span these areas and roads re-routed to the extent feasible.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 6 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with 3 miles of intermittent streams and overlap with less than 1 acre of waterbodies.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

The 17 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with perennial and intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with less than 1 mile of perennial streams, 7 miles of intermittent streams, and 1 acre of waterbodies.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The 6 miles of area amended for an exception through a VRM Class II area would cross or overlap with 3 miles of intermittent streams.

4.5.4.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the water resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of miles of overlap with streams and waterbodies impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to water resources from erosion and contamination from spills or equipment leaks.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 92 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 119 miles of intermittent streams and 113 acres of waterbodies.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 49 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with 1 mile of perennial streams, 54 miles of intermittent streams, and less than 1 acre of waterbodies.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect.

BLM Price Field Office

The 3 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with perennial and intermittent streams. The amended area would overlap with less than 1 mile of perennial streams and 3 miles of intermittent streams.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

4.5.4.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the water resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of miles of overlap with streams and waterbodies impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to water resources from erosion and contamination from spills or equipment leaks.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 19 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with perennial and intermittent streams and waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 1 mile of perennial streams, 12 miles of intermittent streams, and less than 1 acre of waterbodies.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 2-mile newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with less than 1 mile of perennial streams, 1 mile of intermittent streams, and less than 1 mile of waterbodies.

4.5.4.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the water resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of miles of overlap with streams and waterbodies impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to water resources from erosion and contamination from spills or equipment leaks.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 55 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with perennial and intermittent streams and waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 1 mile of perennial streams, 55 miles of intermittent streams, and 1 acre of waterbodies.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 6 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with less than 1 mile of perennial streams and 1 mile of intermittent streams.

4.5.4.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.4.8 Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price Alternative Connectors would require plan amendments in the Price FO for less than 1 mile each. The Castle Dale Alternative Connector would not overlap with streams or waterbodies. The Price Alternative Connector would overlap with 1 mile of perennial and intermittent streams. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource.

4.5.4.9 Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. Proximity of the water resource in relation to the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of miles of overlap with streams and waterbodies impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to water resources from erosion and contamination from spills or equipment leaks.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 3 miles of newly designated utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation that would require a plan amendment would overlap with less than 1 mile of intermittent streams.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 5 miles of newly designated utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 1 mile of perennial streams and 2 miles of intermittent streams.

4.5.5 Vegetation

Section 3.5 provides a detailed description of impacts to vegetation resources within the corridors proposed. Plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections, which is subdivided into general vegetation and forest management.

4.5.5.1 General Vegetation

Allowing for potential future development of utilities in areas where currently none exist could affect the vegetation composition and spread of noxious weeds. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Vegetation could be removed temporarily during potential future project construction or the vegetation composition permanently altered for installation of project facilities in areas where amendments provide for corridors or for one time construction of the project. Surface disturbing activities, human presence, and wildland fires all have the potential to increase the spread of noxious and invasive weed species.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The type of vegetation resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of acres of vegetation type impacted by the amendments

provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to changes in vegetation composition and spread of noxious weeds.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 78 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 105 acres of grassland, 455 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 580 acres of dunes, 265 acres of cliff and canyon, 22,213 acres of shrubland, 100 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land, 41 acres of forested areas, and less than one acre of agricultural land.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 36 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 29 acres of agricultural land, 943 acres of grassland, 8 acres of pinyon-juniper, 6,740 acres of shrubland, 52 acres of cliff and canyon, and 27 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 28 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 97 acres of grassland, 841 acres of pinyon-juniper, 5,276 acres of shrubland, 664 acres of cliff and canyon, and 98 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The new utility corridor of less than 1 mile that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 50 acres of shrubland, 1 acre of forested areas, and 18 acres of pinyon-juniper.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Less than 1 mile of amended area for an exception through a ROW Exclusion Area would require a plan amendment that would overlap with 90 acres of desert shrubland. No other vegetation communities would be within the amended area.

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The type of vegetation resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of acres of vegetation type impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to changes in vegetation composition and spread of noxious weeds.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 81 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 94 acres of forest communities, 105 acres of grassland, 487 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 22,827 acres of shrubland, 581 acres of dunes, 125 acres of barren/sparsely vegetated areas, and less than 1 acre of agricultural land.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts from expansion and conversion of a utility corridor to allow overhead facilities would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. The northern portion of the corridor passes through a “weed free” area. Efforts to combat the invasion and spread of noxious weeds would likely need to be elevated to ensure this condition in, along, and near the corridor. In areas near the Oil Spring Mountain and White River Riparian ACECs, efforts will need to be elevated to ensure the protection of Remnant Vegetation Associations (vegetation species with the potential to be listed in the near future).

The 44 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 331 acres of forested areas, 10 acres of grassland, 2,541 acres of pinyon-juniper, 1 acre of riparian and wetland communities, 4,584 acres of shrubland, and 91 acres of cliff and canyon.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 7 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 46 acres of forested, 978 acres of pinyon-juniper, 251 acres of shrubland, 2 acres of riparian and wetland, and 5 acres of cliff and canyon.

BLM Price Field Office

The 19 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with less than 1 acre of agricultural land, 72 acres of grassland, 35 acres of pinyon-juniper, 24 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 1,023 acres of shrubland, 26 acres of cliff and canyon, and 91 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No forested areas would be within the amended area.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The type of vegetation resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of acres of vegetation type impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to changes in vegetation composition and spread of noxious weeds.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 63 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 40 acres of forested areas, 198 acres of grassland, 265 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 18,207 acres of shrubland, 62 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land, 17 acres of dunes, 48 acres of cliff and canyon, and less than one acre of agricultural areas.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 6 miles of newly designated utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 36 acres of agricultural lands, 101 acres of grasslands, and 725 acres of shrublands.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

The 17 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 115 acres of grassland, 232 acres of pinyon-juniper, 2 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 1,287 acres of shrubland, 14 acres of dunes, 222 acres of cliff and canyon, and 354 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No agricultural land or forested areas would be within the amended area.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The 6 miles of VRM Class II area amended to allow an exception would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 1 acre of grasslands, 4 acres of pinyon-juniper, less than 1 acre of riparian and wetland communities, 1,015 acres of shrubland, and 8 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land.

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The type of vegetation resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of acres of vegetation type impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to changes in vegetation composition and spread of noxious weeds.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 92 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 1 acre of agricultural land, 71 acres of forested areas, 98 acres of grassland, 664 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 28,459 acres of shrubland, 35 acres of dunes, 63 acres of cliff and canyon, and 57 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 49 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 46 acres of agricultural land, 666 acres of forested, 1,119 acres of grassland, 4,707 acres of pinyon-juniper, 39 acres of riparian and wetland, 4,942 acres of shrubland, 1,010 acres of cliff and canyon, and 134 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in reductions to riparian vegetation community types and compromise stream bank

stability; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect.

BLM Price Field Office

The 3 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 188 acres of forested areas, 2 acres of grassland, 400 acres of pinyon-juniper, 181 acres of shrubland, and 20 acres of cliff and canyon.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The type of vegetation resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of acres of vegetation type impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to changes in vegetation composition and spread of noxious weeds.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 19 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 6 acres of forested areas, 100 acres of grasslands, 26 acres of pinyon-juniper, 2,787 acres of shrubland, 69 acres of cliff and canyon, and 17 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The less than 2 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 2 acres of grasslands, 31 acres of pinyon-juniper, 155 acres of shrubland, and 1 acre of forested land.

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The type of vegetation resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of acres of vegetation type impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to changes in vegetation composition and spread of noxious weeds.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 55 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 46 acres of agricultural land, 1,474 acres of forested areas, 1,130 acres of grasslands, 4,679 acres of pinyon-juniper, 39 acres of riparian and wetland, 5,258 acres of shrubland, 1,020 acres of cliff and canyon, and 134 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in reductions to riparian vegetation community types and compromise stream bank

stability; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 6 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 573 acres of forested lands, 24 acres of grasslands, 23 acres of pinyon-juniper, 603 acres of shrubland, and 67 acres of cliff and canyon. No agricultural areas of riparian and wetland communities would be affected.

Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price Alternative Connectors would require less than 1 mile each of plan amendments involving the Price FO. The Castle Dale Alternative Connector would overlap with 7 acres of shrubland. The Price Alternative Connector would overlap with 68 acres of pinyon-juniper, 22 acres of shrubland, 1 acre of cliff and canyon, and 2 acres of sparsely vegetated barren land.

Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The type of vegetation resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of acres of vegetation type impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of risk of potential impacts to changes in vegetation composition and spread of noxious weeds.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 3-mile utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 172 acres of forested areas and 144 acres of shrubland communities.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 5 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 519 acres of forested lands, 34 acres of grasslands, 4 acres of pinyon-juniper, 643 acres of shrubland, and 19 acres of cliff and canyon.

4.5.5.2 Forest Management

Allowing for potential future utilities to be developed in areas where currently none exist could affect the management of forests. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Corridor areas may influence the size and location of commercial timber harvesting. Initial ROW clearing and operational maintenance would result in a reduced fuel load and, therefore, incrementally reduce the potential for wildland fires in the area of the corridor. There would be a greater emphasis on fire suppression to protect the developed infrastructure within utility corridors designated with these amendments.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following areas because the areas do not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest: BLM Little Snake FO, BLM Salt Lake FO, and BLM Caliente FO. Only areas that may have forest management concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Since all forested and woodland areas within the FO are open to commercial and noncommercial timber harvesting, the location of this corridor could potentially interfere with harvest operations in the Powder Rim area of the FO. However, given that the limited forest resources exist along the route, impacts to forest management would not be anticipated.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Some of these areas that would be crossed Alternative A are approved for woodcutting and the existence of the corridor could interfere with harvesting operations.

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on forest management in the respective FOs is discussed below. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following areas because the areas do not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest: BLM Little Snake FO, BLM White River FO, BLM Price FO, and BLM Caliente FO. Only areas that may have forest management concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following section.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Since all forested and woodland areas within the FO are open to commercial and noncommercial timber harvesting, the location of this corridor could potentially interfere with harvest operations in the Powder Rim area of the FO. However, given that the limited forest resources exist along the route, impacts to forest management would not be anticipated.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Some of the areas that are crossed by Alternative B are approved for woodcutting and the existence of the corridor could interfere with harvesting operations.

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on forest management in the respective BLM offices is discussed below. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following areas because the areas do not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest: BLM Little Snake FO, BLM White River FO, BLM Price FO, and BLM Caliente FO. Only areas that may have forest management concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Since all forested and woodland areas within the FO are open to commercial and noncommercial timber harvesting, the location of this corridor could potentially interfere with harvest operations in the

Powder Rim area of the FO. However, given that the limited forest resources exist along the route, impacts to forest management would not be anticipated.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on forest management in the respective BLM offices is discussed below. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following area because the area does not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest: BLM Little Snake FO, BLM Price FO, and BLM Caliente FO. Only areas that may have forest management concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following section.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Since all forested and woodland areas within the FO are open to commercial and noncommercial timber harvesting, the location of this corridor could potentially interfere with harvest operations in the Powder Rim area of the FO. However, given that the limited forest resources exist along the route, impacts to forest management would not be anticipated.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Some of the areas that are crossed by Alternative D are approved for woodcutting and the existence of the corridor could interfere with harvesting operations.

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed plan amendment would have minor and inconsequential effects in the BLM Salt Lake FO because the area does not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest. Only areas that may have forest management concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following section.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Some of the areas that are crossed by Alternative E are approved for woodcutting and the existence of the corridor could interfere with harvesting operations.

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed plan amendment would have minor and inconsequential effects in the BLM Salt Lake FO because the area does not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest. Only areas that may have forest management concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following section.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Some of the areas that are crossed by Alternative F are approved for woodcutting and the existence of the corridor could interfere with harvesting operations.

Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

Alternative Connectors

The proposed amendments for alternative connectors are located in the Price FO. The proposed plan amendment would have minor and inconsequential effects in the BLM Price FO because the area does not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest.

Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. In the Vernal FO the proposed plan amendment could interfere with timber harvesting operations; however, the proposed plan amendment would have minor and inconsequential effects in the BLM Salt Lake FO because the area does not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Some of the areas that are crossed by the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation are approved for woodcutting and the existence of the corridor could interfere with harvesting operations.

4.5.6 Special Status Plant Species

The expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Impacts to special status plant species would generally be the same as discussed in Section 4.5.5, Vegetation. On BLM -administered lands (and private lands in many cases), surveys typically are required in potential or known habitats of threatened, endangered, or otherwise special status species. These surveys would help determine the presence of any special status species or extent of habitat, and protective measures generally would be taken to avoid or minimize direct disturbance in these important areas before any potential future proposed utility projects are permitted. Additional information on special status species that may be affected is presented in Section 3.6, Special Status Plant Species.

4.5.6.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status plant species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status plant species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status species from expansion of the existing utility corridor along I-80 and designation of a new utility corridor south of I-80 would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-21** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM Rawlins FO.

Table 4-21 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Rawlins Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Ute ladies'-tresses	<i>Spiranthes diluvialis</i>	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Threatened

The proposed utility corridor would cross 27 acres of known or modeled areas with Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-22** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM Little Snake FO.

Table 4-22 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Little Snake Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Ute ladies'-tresses	<i>Spiranthes diluvialis</i>	Moffat	Colorado	Threatened

The proposed utility corridor would traverse 8 acres containing known or modeled areas with Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-23** presents the federally listed and candidate species for the BLM Vernal FO.

Table 4-23 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Vernal Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Graham's penstemon	<i>Penstemon grameii</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Proposed Threatened
Shrubby reed-mustard	<i>Schoenocrambe suffrutescens</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Endangered
White River beardtongue	<i>Penstemon scariosus</i>	Uintah	Utah	Candidate
Ute ladies'-tresses	<i>Spiranthes diluvialis</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Threatened
Clay reed-mustard	<i>Schoenocrambe argillacea</i>	Uintah	Utah	Threatened
Pariette cactus	<i>Sclerocactus brevispinus</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Threatened
Uinta Basin hookless cactus	<i>Sclerocactus wetlandicus</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Threatened

The proposed utility corridor would cross areas containing known or modeled areas with 233 acres of Graham's penstemon and 5 acres containing known or modeled habitat for Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from a new utility corridor on public lands would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-24** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM Salt Lake FO.

The proposed utility corridor would cross 7 acres containing known or modeled areas with Deseret milk-vetch. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

Table 4-24 Federally Listed and Candidate Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Deseret milk-vetch	<i>Astragalus desereticus</i>	Utah	Utah	Threatened
Clay phacelia	<i>Phacelia argillacea</i>	Utah	Utah	Endangered
Ute ladies'-tresses	<i>Spiranthes diluvialis</i>	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Threatened

BLM Caliente Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from less than 1 mile of an exception through a ROW Exclusion Area would be similar to those discussed in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-25** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM Caliente FO.

Table 4-25 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Caliente Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Las Vegas buckwheat	<i>Eriogonum corybosum</i> var. <i>nilesii</i>	Clark, Lincoln	Nevada	Candidate

No known or modeled special status plant species habitat would be crossed by Alternative A in the Caliente FO.

4.5.6.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status plant species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from a new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. The proposed utility corridor would cross 30 acres of known or modeled areas with Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to special status species from expansion and conversion of an underground utility corridor to allow aboveground development would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-26** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM White River FO.

The proposed corridor would traverse areas containing known or modeled areas with Graham's penstemon, Ute ladies'-tresses, and White River beardtongue as follows: Graham's penstemon – 56 acres, Ute ladies'-tresses – 1 acre, and White River beardtongue – 106 acres. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

Table 4-26 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM White River Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
White River beardtongue	<i>Penstemon scariosus</i> var. <i>albifluvis</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Candidate
Graham's penstemon	<i>Penstemon grahamii</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Proposed Threatened
Ute ladies'-tresses	<i>Spiranthes diluvialis</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Threatened

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross less than 1 acre of known or modeled habitat for Graham's penstemon, 2 acres with known or modeled areas of Ute ladies'-tresses, and 570 acres with known or modeled areas of White River beardtongue. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from a new utility corridor or widening an existing corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-27** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM Price FO.

Table 4-27 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Price Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Jones Cycladenia	<i>Cycladenia humilis</i> var. <i>jonesii</i>	Grand, Emery	Utah	Threatened
Wright fishhook cactus	<i>Sclerocactus wrightiae</i>	Emery	Utah	Endangered
Last chance townsendia	<i>Townsendia aprica</i>	Emery	Utah	Threatened
San Rafael cactus	<i>Pediocactus despainii</i>	Emery	Utah	Endangered
Winkler cactus	<i>Pediocactus winkleri</i>	Emery	Utah	Threatened
Barneby reed-mustard	<i>Schoenocrambe barnebyi</i>	Emery	Utah	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would cross 772 acres containing known or modeled areas with Wright fishhook cactus and 139 acres of known or modeled areas with Winkler cactus. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.6.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status plant species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross 58 acres of areas containing known or modeled Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would not cross areas containing known or modeled habitat for any special status plant species.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross areas containing known or modeled areas special status plant species as follows: Jones cycladenia – 235 acres, Wright fishhook cactus – 1,906 acres, and Winkler cactus – 119 acres. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitats to the extent practical.

BLM Caliente Field Office

No known or modeled special status plant species habitat would be crossed by the amended area for Alternative C in the Caliente FO.

4.5.6.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status plant species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross 265 acres of areas containing known or modeled Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross less than 1 acre of Duchesne greenthread, less than 1 acre of Goodrich blazingstar, 4,637 acres of Graham's penstemon, 1,759 acres of Uinta Basin hookless cactus, less than 1 acre of Untermann Daisy, 100 acres of Ute ladies'-tresses, 269 acres of clay reed mustard, and 3 acres of White River beardtongue. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to "recreational" would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in reductions to special status plant species if their habitat is adjacent to the Green River in the Four Mile Bottom area; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect. For more information regarding suitable habitat for special status plant species, see Section 3.6.

BLM Price Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would not cross areas containing known or modeled special status plant species.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

4.5.6.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendment would have on special status species in the respective area is discussed in the following section. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status plant species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross 1 acre of modeled habitat for Ute ladies'-tresses and 1 acre of habitat for White River beardtongue. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The amended area of less than 1 mile would cross 7 acres containing Deseret milk-vetch. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

4.5.6.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on special status plant species in the respective BLM office is discussed below. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status plant species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross less than 1 acre of Duchesne greenthread, less than 1 acre of Goodrich blazingstar, 5,648 acres of Graham's penstemon, 1,759 acres of Uinta Basin hookless cactus, less than 1 acre of Untermann daisy, 100 acres of Ute ladies'-tresses, 269 acres of clay reed mustard, and 3 acres of White River beardtongue. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to "recreational" would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in reductions to special status plant species if their habitat is adjacent to the Green River in the Four Mile Bottom area; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect. For more information regarding suitable habitat for special status plant species, see Section 3.6.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 6 mile amended area would not cross 7 acres containing known or modeled Deseret milk-vetch. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

4.5.6.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.6.8 Alternative Connectors

The alternative connectors that would require plan amendments are in the Price FO. The less than 1 mile of utility corridor for the Castle Dale and Price connectors would not cross areas containing known or modeled special status plant species.

4.5.6.9 Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Impacts are discussed below. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status plant species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 3 miles of utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would cross less than 1 acre each of known or modeled habitat for Goodrich blazingstar, Graham's penstemon, Slender moonwort, and Untermann daisy. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 5 miles of utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would cross less than 1 acre each of known or modeled habitat for Slender moonwort. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

4.5.7 Wildlife

Allowing for potential future development of utilities in areas where currently none exist could result in habitat loss, fragmentation, increased human disturbance, and direct wildlife mortalities. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Potential impacts from habitat loss would include the incremental loss of potential cover and forage and the incremental increase of habitat fragmentation from vegetation removal associated with surface disturbance activities. Habitat loss or alteration also would result in direct losses of smaller, less mobile species of wildlife, such as small mammals and reptiles, and the displacement of more mobile species into adjacent habitats. In areas where habitats are at, or near, carrying capacity, animal displacement could result in some unquantifiable reductions in local wildlife populations. Wildlife mortalities may occur as a result of road construction, vehicle and transmission line collisions, and crushing of less mobile species, nests, and/or burrows. Potential impacts also could include increased predation, nest and burrow abandonment, or loss of eggs or young during construction.

The primary impact is wildlife avoidance (displacement) of otherwise suitable habitat in and around the disturbance areas during construction and operation. Avoidance would result in displacement of animals from an area larger than the actual disturbance area. The primary operation-related impacts to wildlife are mortalities as a result of electrocution and collision from transmission line components. Additional information on wildlife is presented in Section 3.7, Wildlife.

4.5.7.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects

from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The wildlife resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to wildlife species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 78 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (i.e., pronghorn and mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 78 miles of the newly designated utility corridor would overlap with critical habitat for elk (1,438 acres), mule deer (2,698 acres), and pronghorn antelope (3,586 acres). Sage-grouse core areas would be overlapped by 2,385 acres and 199 raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 13,350 acres. Exceptions to stipulations for raptor nest buffers that occur within the corridor would be required for all utilities using the corridor. Mitigation and monitoring would be resolved for site-specific projects with the BLM staff.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 36 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative A would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (i.e., pronghorn, mule deer, and elk) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., severe winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 36 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (2,591 acres), mule deer (4,706 acres), and pronghorn antelope (3,163 acres). Sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped by 3,083 acres and 47 raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 3,726 acres. Exceptions to stipulations for raptor nest buffers that occur within the corridor may be required for all utilities using the corridor. Mitigation techniques including relocation of active nests may be required.

The new utility corridor of less than 1 mile for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 3 would overlap with critical habitat for elk (16 acres), mule deer (2 acres), and pronghorn antelope (7 acres); sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped by 16 acres; and no raptor nest buffers would be crossed. The new utility corridor of 2 miles for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 4 would overlap with critical habitat for elk (33 acres), mule deer (210 acres), and pronghorn antelope (7 acres); sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped by 50 acres; and no raptor nest buffers would be crossed.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 28 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative A would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (e.g., mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 28 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for mule deer (1,515 acres), and pronghorn antelope (6,229 acres). The corridor also would overlap with 1,576 acres of sage-grouse brooding and rearing habitat and 1,324 acres of winter habitat, as well as 3,684 acres associated with 55 raptor nest buffer zones.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from one mile of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative A would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (e.g., mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance.

The utility corridor of one mile that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for mule deer (69 acres), and elk (69 acres). The corridor also would overlap with 48 acres associated with 2 raptor nest buffer zones. The corridor would not overlap with sage-grouse habitat.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from less than 1 mile of an exception through a ROW Exclusion Area would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (i.e., desert bighorn sheep), raptors, and reptiles would be more pronounced in this FO due to presence and available habitat (e.g., occupied habitat) and sensitivity to disturbance. No known critical or priority habitat would be within the amended area.

4.5.7.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The wildlife resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to wildlife species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 81 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative B would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. The 81 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (1,343 acres), mule deer (3,780 acres), and pronghorn antelope (5,058 acres). Sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped by 2,385 acres and 219 raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 14,683 acres.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to wildlife expanding and locating aboveground development in 44 miles of a corridor designated as underground only would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (i.e., pronghorn, mule deer, and elk) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., severe winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 44 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for mule deer (3,116 acres). Sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat would not be overlapped. An estimated 17 raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 2,409 acres. Exceptions to stipulations for raptor nest buffers that occur within the corridor would be required for all utilities using the corridor. Mitigation and monitoring would be resolved for site-specific projects with BLM staff.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 7 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative B would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (e.g., mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 7 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for black bear (1,246 acres), elk (961 acres), and mule deer (80 acres). No sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat or raptor nest buffers would be intersected.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 19 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (i.e., desert bighorn sheep) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 19 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (187 acres), mule deer (9 acres), and pronghorn antelope (641 acres). An estimated 16 raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 180 acres. No sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat would be intersected.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.7.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The wildlife resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to wildlife species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from expanding 63 miles of an existing utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (i.e., pronghorn and mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 63 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for mule deer (7,863 acres), elk (less than 1 acre) and pronghorn antelope (12,419 acres). Sage-grouse core areas would be overlapped by 3,349 acres and 387 raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 15,772 acres. Exceptions to stipulations for raptor nest buffers that occur within the corridor would be required for all utilities using the corridor. Mitigation techniques and monitoring would be resolved for site-specific projects with BLM staff.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from amending 6 miles of an existing utility corridor would be the same as those stated for Alternative A. The 6 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (865 acres), mule deer (467 acres), and pronghorn antelope (421 acres). Sage-grouse core areas would be overlapped by 685 acres and 17 raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 656 acres.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 17 miles of a new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative B. The 17 miles of utility corridor would overlap with 127 acres of critical habitat for pronghorn and 631 acres associated with 4 raptor nest buffer zones. No sage-grouse preliminary

priority habitat would be overlapped by the portion of the utility corridor that would require a plan amendment.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from an exception of 6 miles through a VRM Class II area would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (i.e., desert bighorn sheep), raptors, and reptiles would be more pronounced in this FO due to presence and available habitat (e.g., occupied habitat) and sensitivity to disturbance. No known critical or priority habitat would be within the amended area.

4.5.7.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The wildlife resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to wildlife species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from expanding 92 miles of an existing utility and designating a new corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (i.e., pronghorn and mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 92 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (1,343 acres), mule deer (6,401 acres), and pronghorn antelope (8,192 acres). Sage-grouse core areas would be overlapped by 2,385 acres and 246 raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 20,736 acres. Exceptions to stipulations for raptor nest buffers that occur within the corridor would be required for all utilities using the corridor. Mitigation and monitoring would be resolved for site-specific projects with BLM staff.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 49 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative D would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (e.g., mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 49 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (922 acres), moose (1,703 acres), mule deer (814 acres), pronghorn (3,686 acres), and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep (721 acres). The corridor also would overlap with 1,546 acres of sage-grouse brooding and rearing habitat and 1,646 acres of winter habitat, as well as 3,798 acres associated with 139 raptor nest buffer zones.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in impacts to wildlife habitat that use areas adjacent to the Green River in the Fourmile Bottom area; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect. For more information regarding suitable habitat for wildlife species see Section 3.7.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 3 miles of a new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative B. The 3 miles of utility corridor would overlap with critical habitat for elk (539 acres), moose (795 acres), and mule deer (171 acres). The corridor also would overlap with 107 acres associated with 2 raptor nest buffer zones. No sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped by the portion of the utility corridor that would require a plan amendment.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

4.5.7.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The wildlife resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to wildlife species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 19 miles of a newly designated utility corridor to accommodate Alternative E would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (e.g., mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 19 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (194 acres), moose (194 acres), mule deer (249 acres), and pronghorn (2,816 acres). The corridor also would overlap with 2,874 acres of sage-grouse brooding and rearing habitat and 2,622 acres of winter habitat, as well as 1,998 acres associated with 66 raptor nest buffer zones.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 2 miles of a newly designated utility corridor to accommodate Alternative E would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (e.g., elk) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (189 acres), moose (119 acres), and mule deer (189 acres). The corridor also would overlap with 119 acres of sage-grouse brooding and rearing habitat and 119 acres of winter habitat. Two raptor nest buffer zones totaling 48 acres would overlap with the amended area.

4.5.7.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The wildlife resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to wildlife species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 55 miles of a newly designated utility corridor to accommodate Alternative F would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. Impacts to big game (e.g., mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial range), and sensitivity to disturbance.

The 55 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (916 acres), moose (2,843 acres), mule deer (2,020 acres), pronghorn (3,686 acres), and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep (721 acres). The corridor also would overlap with 1,546 acres of sage-grouse brooding and rearing habitat and 1,646 acres of winter habitat, as well as 3,798 acres associated with 139 raptor nest buffer zones.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in impacts to wildlife habitat that use areas adjacent to the Green River in the Fourmile Bottom area; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect. For more information regarding suitable habitat for wildlife species see Section 3.7.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 6 miles of a newly designated utility corridor to accommodate Alternative F would overlap with critical habitat for elk (235 acres), moose (1,241 acres), and mule deer (1,310 acres). No areas of sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat would be affected. Two raptor nest buffer zones totaling 48 acres would be overlapped.

4.5.7.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.7.8 Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price alternative connectors would require plan amendments in the BLM Price FO. The Castle Dale Alternative Connector would not overlap with any priority or critical habitat for wildlife. The Price Alternative Connector would overlap with critical habitat for elk (97 acres) and mule deer (97 acres); 97 acres associated with 6 raptor nest buffer zones; and no areas of sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource.

4.5.7.9 Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated in the introduction for this resource. The wildlife resources that would be affected by the area proposed for amendment is discussed in the following subsections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to wildlife species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 3 miles of newly designated utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would overlap with critical habitat for elk (17 acres), moose (306 acres), and mule deer (323 acres). No areas of sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat or raptor nest buffers would be overlapped.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 5 miles of newly designated utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would overlap with critical habitat for elk (218 acres), moose (1,033 acres), and mule deer (1,241 acres). No areas of sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat or raptor nest buffers would be overlapped.

4.5.8 Special Status Wildlife Species

The expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Impacts to special status wildlife species would generally be the same as discussed in Section 4.5.7, Wildlife. On BLM-administered lands (and private lands in many cases), surveys typically are required in potential or known habitats of threatened, endangered, or otherwise special status species. These surveys would help determine the presence of any special status species or extent of habitat, and protective measures generally would be taken to avoid or minimize direct disturbance in these important areas before any potential future proposed utility projects are permitted. Additional information on special status species that may be affected is presented in Section 3.8, Special Status Wildlife Species.

4.5.8.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status wildlife species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status wildlife species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from the 78 miles of expansion of the existing utility corridor along I-80 and designation of a new utility corridor south of I-80 would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-28** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM Rawlins FO.

Table 4-28 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Rawlins Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Black-footed ferret	<i>Mustela nigripes</i>	Carbon	Wyoming	Experimental, NEP ¹
Black-footed ferret	<i>Mustela nigripes</i>	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Endangered
Canada lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	Carbon	Wyoming	Threatened
Greater sage-grouse	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Candidate
Interior Least Tern	<i>Sterna antillarum</i>	Carbon	Wyoming	Endangered
Piping Plover	<i>Charadrius melodus</i>	Carbon	Wyoming	Threatened
Whooping Crane	<i>Grus Americana</i>	Carbon	Wyoming	Endangered
Yellow-billed cuckoo (western)	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Candidate

¹ Non-essential Population.

Impacts to the black-footed ferret, sage-grouse, and raptors would be more pronounced than other species in this FO due to their relative abundance, available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. All proposed plan amendment alternatives through the BLM Rawlins FO cross USFWS non-block cleared areas and white-tailed prairie dog colonies, raptors nest buffers, and sage-grouse core areas along I-80. A total of 1,487 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 78 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species. Projects proposed in the corridor would need to abide by timing stipulations and request an exception under unique or emergency situations.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 36 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-29** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM Little Snake FO.

Table 4-29 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Little Snake Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Black-footed ferret	<i>Mustela nigripes</i>	Moffat	Colorado	Experimental, NEP ¹
Canada lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	Moffat, Routt	Colorado	Threatened
North American wolverine	<i>Gulo gulo</i>	Moffat, Routt	Colorado	Candidate
Yellow-billed cuckoo (western)	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	Moffat, Routt	Colorado	Candidate
Mexican spotted owl	<i>Strix occidentalis lucida</i>	Moffat	Colorado	Threatened

¹ Non-essential Population.

Impacts to sage-grouse and raptors would be more pronounced than other species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. All proposed plan amendment alternatives through the BLM Little Snake Office cross raptors nest buffers and sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat. Exceptions to stipulations for buffers to protect these species that occur within the corridor would be necessary for all proposed utilities. A total of 419 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies and 4,192 acres of Black-footed ferret management areas would be overlapped by the 36 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species. Mitigation measures including avoidance or off-site compensatory mitigation and monitoring would be required site-specific projects.

The new utility corridors for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 would not overlap with known or modeled habitat for special status wildlife species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 28 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-30** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM Vernal FO.

Table 4-29 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Vernal Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Canada lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Threatened
Black-footed ferret	<i>Mustela nigripes</i>	Uintah	Utah	Experimental, NEP ¹
Yellow-billed cuckoo (western)	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Candidate
Greater sage-grouse	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Candidate
Mexican spotted owl	<i>Strix occidentalis lucida</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Threatened

Impacts to the black-footed ferret, sage-grouse, and raptors would be more pronounced than other species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. However, the area within the proposed utility corridor does not encroach on buffers for these species and is located north of occupied sage-grouse habitat. A total of 264 acres of white-tailed

prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 28 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from a new utility corridor on public lands would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-31** presents the federally listed and candidate species for the BLM Salt Lake FO.

Table 4-30 Federally Listed and Candidate Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Canada lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Threatened
Yellow-billed cuckoo (Western)	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Candidate
Greater sage-grouse	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Candidate

The area within the proposed utility corridor does not encroach on buffers to protect special status species.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from less than 1 mile of an exception through a ROW Exclusion Area would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-32** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM Caliente FO.

Table 4-31 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Caliente Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Yellow-billed cuckoo (western)	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	Lincoln	Nevada	Candidate
Southwestern willow flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	Lincoln	Nevada	Endangered
Desert tortoise	<i>Gopherus agassizii</i>	Lincoln	Nevada	Threatened
Greater sage-grouse	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Candidate

Impacts to reptiles (e.g., desert tortoise, banded gila monster) and raptors would be more pronounced within this FO due to available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. This proposed plan amendment alternative would cross 90 acres of critical habitat for desert tortoise. Also see Table 5-30 Region III: SDAs Within Shared 2-mile Transmission Line Corridor for additional information.

4.5.8.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status wildlife species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status wildlife species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 81 miles of a new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. A total of 1,662 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be

overlapped by the 81 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from the expansion and conversion of 44 miles of an underground utility corridor to allow aboveground development would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-33** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM White River FO.

Table 4-32 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM White River Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Black-footed ferret	<i>Mustela nigripes</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Experimental, NEP ¹
Canada lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Threatened
Greater sage-grouse	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Candidate
Yellow-billed cuckoo (western)	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Candidate
North American wolverine	<i>Gulo gulo luscus</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Candidate
Mexican spotted owl	<i>Strix occidentalis lucida</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Threatened

¹ Non-essential Population.

Impacts to sage-grouse and raptors would be more pronounced than other species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. All proposed plan amendment alternatives through the BLM White River Field Office cross raptors nest buffers and sage-grouse preliminary general habitat. A total of 30 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 44 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species. Mitigation and monitoring measures would be required with site-specific approvals.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 7 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. However, this alternative would affect no areas of greater sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat and no areas of white-tailed prairie dog. Approximately 272 acres of poor quality habitat for the Mexican spotted owl would occur in the amended area.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 19 miles of a new utility corridor or possibly widening an existing corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-34** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM Price FO.

Impacts to raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. A total of 60 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies and 47 acres of Utah prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 19 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

Table 4-33 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Price Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
California condor	<i>Gymnogyps californianus</i>	Grand, Emery	Utah	Experimental, NEP ¹
Yellow-billed cuckoo (western)	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	Grand, Emery	Utah	Candidate
Greater sage-grouse	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>	Grand, Emery	Utah	Candidate
Mexican spotted owl	<i>Strix occidentalis lucida</i>	Grand, Emery	Utah	Threatened
Southwestern willow flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	Grand, Emery	Utah	Endangered

¹ Non-essential Population.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.8.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status wildlife species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status wildlife species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 63 miles of a new utility corridor or aboveground development in portion of a corridor designated as underground would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. However, this alternative also would cross the sage-grouse core area that extends south of I-80 and would overlap a total of 317 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies by the 63 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 6 miles of a new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. Approximately 419 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 17 miles of a new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative B. Exceptions to buffers of white-tailed prairie dog colonies may need to be granted if avoidance or minimization is not possible when siting utilities. A total of 26 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies and 44 acres of Utah prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 17 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 5 miles of the VRM Class II area amended to allow an exception would have no known special status wildlife species habitat overlapped by the amended area.

4.5.8.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status wildlife species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status wildlife species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 92 miles of a new utility corridor or aboveground development in portion of a corridor designated as underground would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. A total of 1,350 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 92 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 49 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. However, this alternative would affect less area of sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat and 31 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies. A total of 606 acres of fair quality, and 95 acres of good quality as well as 2,191 acres of poor quality Mexican spotted owl habitat would be overlapped by the 49 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of special status species.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in impacts to habitat for special status species that use areas adjacent to the Green River in the Fourmile Bottom area; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect. For more information regarding suitable habitat for special status wildlife species, see Section 3.8.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 3 miles of a new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative B. No known special status wildlife species habitat would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

4.5.8.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendment would have on special status wildlife species in the respective area is discussed in the following section. The quantification of the number of acres of known or

potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status wildlife species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 19 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those discussed under Alternative A. This alternative would affect a comparable area of greater sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat and 122 areas of white-tailed prairie dog. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of special status species.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The area of 2 miles for the utility corridor proposed would not encroach on buffers to protect special status species.

4.5.8.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on special status plant species in the respective BLM office is discussed below. The quantification of the number of acres of known or potential habitat impacted by the amendments provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status wildlife species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 55 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. However, this alternative would affect less area of greater sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat and 31 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies. A total of 606 acres of fair quality, 95 acres of good quality, and 2,306 acres of poor quality Mexican spotted owl habitat would be overlapped by the 55 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in impacts to habitat for special status species that use areas adjacent to the Green River in the Fourmile Bottom area; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect. For more information regarding suitable habitat for special status wildlife species, see Section 3.8.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The area of 6 miles for the utility corridor proposed would not encroach on buffers to protect special status species.

4.5.8.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.8.8 Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price alternative connectors would require plan amendments in the Price FO. The less than 1 mile of newly designated utility corridors would not encroach on buffers to protect special status species.

4.5.8.9 Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The amended areas would not encroach on buffers to protect special status species.

4.5.9 Aquatic Biological Resources

Allowing for potential future development of utilities in areas where currently none exist could result in habitat loss or loss of individuals from stream crossings with equipment and vehicles during construction. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Habitat also could be affected by changes in water quality from increased sedimentation and potential fuel spills or use of surface water for construction. Additional information on aquatic biological resources is presented in Section 3.9, Aquatic Biological Resources.

4.5.9.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. Impacts to aquatic biological resources from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated in the introduction to this resource. Only the amended area in the BLM Little Snake FO would affect streams with aquatic habitat, as discussed below, to provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to aquatic biological species.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 36 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. This alternative would cross both the Little Snake and Yampa rivers, which could deteriorate aquatic habitat conditions if utilities are concentrated in these areas.

The new utility corridors for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 would not overlap with areas of aquatic biological resources.

4.5.9.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Impacts to aquatic biological resources from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated in the introduction to this resource. Amended areas that affect streams with aquatic habitat are noted below to provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to aquatic biological species.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 44 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. This alternative would have multiple stream crossings, including 1 mile of perennial streams and 26 miles of intermittent streams.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 19 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. This alternative would have a stream crossing.

4.5.9.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Impacts to aquatic biological resources from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated in the introduction to this resource. Amended areas that affect streams with aquatic habitat are noted below to provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to aquatic biological species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 63 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. This alternative would cross Muddy Creek.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

4.5.9.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Impacts to aquatic biological resources from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated in the introduction to this resource. Amended areas that affect streams with aquatic habitat are noted below to provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to aquatic biological species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 92 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. This alternative would have a stream crossing, which could deteriorate aquatic habitat conditions if utilities were concentrated in this area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 49 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative D would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. This alternative would cross the Argyle Creek, which could deteriorate aquatic habitat conditions if utilities were concentrated in this area.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation and have associated impacts to aquatic species; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect.

4.5.9.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Impacts to aquatic biological resources from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as discussed under Alternative A.

4.5.9.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Impacts to aquatic biological resources from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as discussed in the introduction to this resource. Amended areas that affect streams with aquatic habitat are noted below to provide the context for the level of potential disturbance to aquatic biological species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 55 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative F would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. This alternative would cross the Argyle Creek, which could deteriorate aquatic habitat conditions if utilities were concentrated in this area.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation and have associated impacts to aquatic species; however, application of best management practices and project siting applied to site-specific projects should minimize the extent of this effect.

4.5.9.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.9.8 Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price alternative connectors would require plan amendments in the Price FO. Impacts to aquatic biological resources associated with less than 1 mile of a newly designated utility corridor effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated in the introduction to this resource.

4.5.9.9 Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Impacts to the amended areas from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated in the introduction to this resource.

4.5.10 Special Status Aquatic Species

The expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Impacts to special status aquatic species would generally be the same as discussed in Section 4.5.9, Aquatic Biological Resources. Section 3.10, Special Status Aquatic Species, provides a detailed description of impacts to special status aquatic species within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.10.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status aquatic species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the known or modeled potential habitat provides the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status aquatic species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from the 78-mile expansion of the existing utility corridor along I-80 and designation of a new utility corridor south of I-80 would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-35** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM Rawlins FO.

Table 4-34 **Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Rawlins Field Office**

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Pallid sturgeon	<i>Scaphirhynchus albus</i>	Carbon	Wyoming	Endangered
Bonytail	<i>Gila elegans</i>	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Endangered
Colorado pikeminnow	<i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Endangered
Humpback chub	<i>Gila cypha</i>	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Endangered
Razorback sucker	<i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would cross one stream near the Colorado state line, which is occupied by Colorado pikeminnow habitat. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span occupied habitat.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 36 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-36** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM Little Snake FO.

Table 4-35 **Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Little Snake Field Office**

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Humpback chub	<i>Gila cypha</i>	Moffat	Colorado	Endangered
Colorado pikeminnow	<i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>	Moffat	Colorado	Endangered
Bonytail	<i>Gila elegans</i>	Moffat	Colorado	Endangered
Razorback sucker	<i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>	Moffat	Colorado	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would have two stream crossings, one occupied by Colorado Pikeminnow and one by both the Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span occupied habitat.

The new utility corridors for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 would not overlap with areas of known or modeled habitat for special status aquatic species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 28 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-37** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM Vernal FO.

The proposed utility corridor would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

Table 4-36 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Vernal Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Humpback chub	<i>Gila cypha</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Endangered
Colorado pikeminnow	<i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Endangered
Bonytail	<i>Gila elegans</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Endangered
Razorback sucker	<i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Endangered

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from a new utility corridor on public lands would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-38** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM Salt Lake FO.

Table 4-38 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Humpback chub	<i>Gila cypha</i>	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Endangered
Colorado pikeminnow	<i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Endangered
Bonytail	<i>Gila elegans</i>	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Endangered
Least chub	<i>Notichthys phlegethontis</i>	Utah	Utah	Candidate
Razorback sucker	<i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Endangered
June sucker	<i>Chasmistes liorus</i>	Utah	Utah	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed area amended for an exception through a ROW Exclusion Area would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.10.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status aquatic species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the known or modeled potential habitat provides the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status aquatic species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 81 miles of a new utility corridor or aboveground development in a portion of corridor designated as underground would be the same as described under Alternative A.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from expansion and conversion of 44 miles of an underground utility corridor to allow aboveground development would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-39** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM White River FO.

Table 4-39 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM White River Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Humpback chub	<i>Gila cypha</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Endangered
Colorado pikeminnow	<i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Endangered
Bonytail	<i>Gila elegans</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Endangered
Razorback sucker	<i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed 7 miles of new utility corridor would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 19 miles of a new utility corridor or possibly widening an existing corridor would be the same as those stated in the introduction to this resource. **Table 4-40** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM Price FO.

Table 4-37 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Price Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Humpback chub	<i>Gila cypha</i>	Grand, Emery	Utah	Endangered
Colorado pikeminnow	<i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>	Grand, Emery	Utah	Endangered
Bonytail	<i>Gila elegans</i>	Grand, Emery	Utah	Endangered
Razorback sucker	<i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>	Grand, Emery	Utah	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would cross less than 1 mile of streams occupied by Colorado Pikeminnow.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.10.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status aquatic species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the known or modeled potential habitat provides the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status aquatic species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 63 miles of a new utility corridor or aboveground development in portion of a corridor designated as underground would be the same as those stated for Alternative A. The proposed utility corridor would cross one stream; however, it does not contain any special status aquatic species.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 6 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated for Alternative A. The proposed utility corridor would have two stream crossings; however, no special status aquatic species occur within these streams.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 17 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as for Alternative B and would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The 5 miles of VRM Class II area amended to allow an exception would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.10.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status aquatic species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the known or modeled potential habitat provides the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status aquatic species.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 92 miles of a new utility corridor or aboveground development in portion of a corridor designated as underground would be the same as those stated for Alternative A. The proposed utility corridor would cross one stream; however, it does not contain any special status aquatic species.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Plan amendments proposed under Alternative D would affect less than 1 mile of streams that are critical habitat for Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 3 miles of a new utility corridor would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

4.5.10.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendment would have on special status aquatic species in the respective area is discussed in the following section. The quantification of the known or modeled potential habitat provides the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status aquatic species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status species from 19 miles of new utility corridor would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.10.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Impacts to special status aquatic species from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated in the introduction to this resource. Additional impacts are noted below. The quantification of the known or modeled potential habitat provides the context for the level of potential disturbance to special status aquatic species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Plan amendments proposed under Alternative F would affect less than 1 mile of streams that are critical habitat for Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from a new 6-mile utility corridor on public lands would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.10.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.10.8 Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price alternative corridors would require plan amendments in the BLM Price FO. Impacts to special status aquatic species associated with less than 1 mile of new utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.10.9 Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. However, the areas amended would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.11 Cultural Resources and Native American Concerns

Plan amendments to create new or expand existing utility corridors would influence the ability to locate utilities in areas. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. These actions in turn have direct impacts on cultural resources, which are analyzed pursuant to NEPA as individual projects are proposed. Cultural properties located in utility corridors would be subject to a potentially higher level of activities that disturb the ground, which would increase the likelihood of unanticipated surface and subsurface discoveries. In addition, utility corridors would be subject to a potentially higher level of visual intrusions from placement of structures and facilities, which would affect cultural resources where setting is an aspect of their integrity. However, all projects proposed in the utility corridors would require SHPO and tribal consultation as well as compliance with Sections 106 and 110 of the NHPA. Section 3.11 provides a detailed description of impacts to resources within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.11.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective FOs is discussed below. The quantification of the number of cultural sites and national historic trails impacted by the amendments provide the context for the potential disturbance of cultural resources.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The newly designated 78-mile corridor would cross one segment of the Cherokee and Overland trails and the Rawlins to Baggs Road Trail and would be within the viewshed of these historic trails as well as the Lincoln Highway Trail. The Cherokee Trail in southwestern Wyoming has been erased and no visible remnants remain. A total of 1 mile of the Cherokee Trail, 2 miles of the Overland Trail, and 2 miles of the Rawlins to Baggs Road would be overlapped by the area amended for a new utility corridor. Disturbance to cultural resource sites and visual impacts to historic properties may be reduced, but not eliminated, through implementation of design features and mitigation measures outlined in the Project-specific programmatic agreements and treatment plans. Cultural resource goals and objectives in the RMP would be compromised for historic trails if contributing segments are crossed. It is unknown at this time whether segments of historic trails or roads crossed by the alternatives contribute to the overall NHRP eligibility of these linear resources. A total of 43 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 36 miles of newly designated corridor would be located to the east of the following cultural resource areas that have been identified as high priority by the BLM: Sand Wash Basin, Vermillion Basin, Irish Canyon, and Cross Mountain. A total of two known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area. Effects would be the same as stated in the introduction for cultural resources.

The new utility corridors for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 would not overlap with known NHRP eligible sites.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 28 miles of new utility corridor would not overlap known NHRP eligible sites.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

There are no known culturally sensitive or high priority areas within the new proposed utility corridor location.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Less than 1 mile of an exception through a ROW Exclusion Area would require a plan amendment. No known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

4.5.11.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective FOs is discussed below. The quantification of the number of cultural sites and national historic trails impacted by the amendments provide the context for the potential disturbance of cultural resources.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 81 miles of a new utility corridor and aboveground designation of an existing corridor would require a plan amendment. Impacts to trails would be the same as for Alternative A. A total of 43 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Forty-four miles of a new utility corridor would require a plan amendment. The closest area of known cultural significance is the Canyon Pintado Historic District, which abuts the northern portion of the corridor. Additionally, the Texas-Missouri-Evacuation Creek area is known to contain cultural resources and would be partially overlapped by the expanded corridor. Both areas are categorized as ROW avoidance in the RMP and future utilities in the expanded corridor should be sited to avoid these areas. While there are pipelines in the existing corridor, conversion to allow aboveground facilities would enable more effects to the viewshed of cultural resources and these areas of known cultural significance. A total of seven known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 7 miles of new utility corridor would overlap with no known NHRP eligible sites.

BLM Price Field Office

Seventeen miles of a new utility corridor would require a plan amendment. Within this area, a total of two known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.11.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective BLM offices is discussed below. The quantification of the number of cultural sites and national historic trails impacted by the amendments provide the context for the potential disturbance of cultural resources.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The existing designated corridor along Highway 789 crosses one segment of the Cherokee and Overland trails and two segments of the Rawlins to Baggs Road Trail and would be within the

viewshed of these historic trails as well as the Lincoln Highway Trail. The 63 miles of expanded utility corridor would include more area crossed by the trail. Less than 1 mile of the Cherokee and Overland Trail and 5 miles of the Rawlins to Baggs Road would be overlapped by the 63 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. A total of 33 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Five miles of a new utility corridor would require a plan amendment. No known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Seventeen miles of a new utility corridor would require a plan amendment. Within this area, a total of two known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Five miles of VRM Class II area would require a plan amendment to allow an exception. No known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

4.5.11.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective BLM offices is discussed below. The quantification of the number of cultural sites and national historic trails impacted by the amendments provide the context for the potential disturbance of cultural resources.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 92 miles of newly designated corridor would cross 3 segments of the Cherokee Trail, 1 segment of the Overland Trail, and 1 segment of the Rawlins to Baggs Road Trail and would be within the viewshed of these historic trails as well as the Lincoln Highway Trail. Effects to the management of cultural resources would be the similar to Alternative A, but would have potential to impact more of the Cherokee Trail. One mile of the Cherokee and Overland trails and 2 miles of the Rawlins to Baggs Road would be overlapped by the new utility corridor. A total of 62 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed plan amendments under Alternative D would overlap with 4 known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as previously described.

BLM Price Field Office

Three miles of a new utility corridor would require a plan amendment. No known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

4.5.11.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect this plan amendment would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below. The quantification of the number of cultural sites and national historic trails impacted by the amendments provide the context for the potential disturbance of cultural resources.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 19 miles of new utility corridor would overlap with 4 known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as previously described.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Two miles of new utility corridor would require a plan amendment. No known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

4.5.11.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below. The quantification of the number of cultural sites and national historic trails impacted by the amendments provide the context for the potential disturbance of cultural resources.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed plan amendments under Alternative F would overlap with 4 known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as previously described.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 6 miles of new utility corridor would not overlap with any known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as previously described.

4.5.11.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.11.8 Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price alternative connectors would require a plan amendment in the Price FO. The less than 1 mile utility corridor would not overlap with any known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as previously described.

4.5.11.9 Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The amended areas would not overlap with known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as previously described.

4.5.12 Visual Resources

Plan amendments to expand an existing corridor or designate a new utility corridor and alter VRM classes would not directly impact visual resources; however, authorization of these amendments would open areas that currently prevent utility development to allow potential future development of energy transmission and other linear ROW projects. Resulting effects to visual resources occur to federal and non-federal lands within and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed.

Allowing for the potential future development of utilities in areas not previously developed could result in visible landscape altering activities and the permanent addition of overhead transmission structures in predominantly natural landscapes that provide settings for recreation and other uses. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Indirect impacts to the scenic qualities of the natural landscapes would occur from visual contrast associated with landscape altering activities and visual intrusions that modify the form, line, color, and texture of the landscape character. Potential future contrasts would alter predominantly natural landscape settings to landscapes that could eventually trend toward an industrialized setting.

Potential future developments proposed in areas where developments do not exist must meet BLM objectives for visual resource management on federal lands. Since areas of VRM Class I/II on BLM lands are intended to maintain or improve the visual setting, any potential future large-scale or predominantly located utility developments in these areas could not be reasonably mitigated to meet the visual resource objectives and plan amendments are proposed in these areas. Adequate visual mitigation in the form of standard BMPs from agency plans and guidance would allow some landscape altering activities and visual intrusions that minimize the extent of modification to the form, line, color, and texture of the landscape character and minimize visual contrast with the natural setting to be compatible with VRM Class III on BLM lands. While the objectives for any development that occurs in VRM Class IV on BLM lands would allow for more landscape altering activities and visual contrast with the natural landscape, every attempt will be made to minimize the impact of potential future development activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements to the extent practical and feasible.

Section 3.12, Visual Resources, provides a detailed description of visual resource impacts within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.12.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the acreage of VRM classes within the amended area provide the context for the level of impact to visual resources.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Expanding an existing utility corridor along I-80 and designating a new corridor south of I-80 for a combined total of 78 miles would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Potential future projects proposed in the utility corridor would need to conform with the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands, including portions of the corridor that are located in sensitive viewpoints of the CDNST SRMA, the Rawlins to Baggs Road Historic Trail, and the Overland NHT.

Siting utilities in multiple locations along I-80 and near Powder Rim in the corridor would not be able to meet current visual quality objectives after mitigation. Of the amended areas, 6,504 acres would be located within VRM Class II areas. Visual resource mitigation measures discussed in Section 3.12 would minimize the extent of these impacts.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

A newly designated 36-mile utility corridor in the Little Snake FO to accommodate Alternative A would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. The new utility corridor would be located in an area that may include recreation and rural land uses that are sensitive to changes in landscape settings. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform to VRM Class III objectives on public lands. Part of the corridor is located in close proximity (up to an estimated 1.0- to 1.5-mile distance) to sensitive viewpoints. Depending on project location, these viewpoints could be affected by proposed future developments within the designated corridor. Affected sensitive viewpoints occur within the nearby Sand Wash Basin and the Cross Mountain WSA. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation. Of the amended areas, 1,267 acres would be located within VRM Class II areas. Visual resource mitigation measures discussed in Section 3.12 would minimize the extent of these impacts.

The new utility corridors for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 would not overlap with VRM Class I or II areas.

BLM Vernal Field Office

A 28-mile newly designated utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative A would be located in an area that generally parallels an existing 345-kV transmission line and would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform to the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

A newly designated utility corridor in the Salt Lake Field Office to accommodate Alternative A would be located in an area that parallels an existing 345-kV transmission line and would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Of the amended areas, 68 acres would be located within VRM Class II areas. Visual resource mitigation measures discussed in Section 3.12 would minimize the extent of these impacts. The new utility corridor would be located in an area that may include recreation and residential land uses that are sensitive to changes in landscape settings.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Less than 1 mile of an exception through a ROW Exclusion Area would allow for one high profile transmission line, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, including portions of the corridor that are located in sensitive viewpoints of the surrounding sensitive areas such as the Delamar Mountains Wilderness. Ninety acres of VRM Class II viewshed area would be overlapped by the amended area.

4.5.12.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the acreage of VRM classes within the amended area provide the context for the level of impact to visual resources.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts from expanding an existing utility corridor along I-80 and designating a new corridor south of I-80 for a combined total of 81 miles would be similar as for Alternative A. Of the amended areas, 7,671 acres would be located within VRM Class II areas. Visual resource mitigation measures discussed in Section 3.12 would minimize the extent of these impacts.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Forty-four miles of a new utility corridor would require a plan amendment. Alternative B crosses scenic BLM lands managed with VRM Class II objectives in the southwest corner of the FO and would not conform to the objectives for VRM Class II, which accommodates only low levels of change to the landscape to retain the existing natural landscape character and could not be reasonably mitigated to a level that would allow the large-scale aboveground utilities to meet VRM Class II objectives. Less than 1 acre of VRM Class I associated with the Oil Spring Mountain WSA and 2,850 acres of VRM Class II viewshed areas would be overlapped by the amended areas. Converting an existing underground utility corridor to allow overhead facilities in the White River FO would allow for additional potential future aboveground linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Potential future projects proposed in the utility corridor would need to conform with the VRM Class objectives on public lands, including portions of the corridor that are located in sensitive viewpoints of the Oil Spring Mountain WSA. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Vernal Field Office

A 7-mile newly designated utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative B would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Five acres of the amended area would be located within VRM Class II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform with VRM Class III objectives on public lands. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Price Field Office

A 19-mile newly designated utility corridor in the Price FO would be located in an area with no existing transmission lines and would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform to the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A

4.5.12.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the acreage of VRM classes within the amended area provide the context for the level of impact to visual resources.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Expanding 63 miles of the existing corridors would allow for additional potential future aboveground linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Of the amended area, 7,701 acres would be located within VRM Class II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the utility corridor would need to conform with the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands, including portions of the corridor that are located in sensitive viewpoints of the CDNST SRMA, the Rawlins to Baggs Road Historic Trail, and the Overland NHT. Siting utilities in multiple locations along I-80 and along SH-789 in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Six miles of the northern portion of Alternative C would need to be amended to allow for overhead utilities. No portion of the amended area would cross through VRM Class I or II areas. Other impacts to visual resources would be similar as those discussed in the introduction to this resource.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

A 17-mile newly designated utility corridor in the Price FO would be located in an area with no existing transmission lines and would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Seven acres of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform to the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands. Siting utilities in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Six miles of a one-time exception to allow a utility through the VRM Class II area would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Of the amended area, 1,062 acres would be located within VRM Class II areas and would no longer meet current visual resource management objectives for this area.

4.5.12.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The quantification of the acreage of VRM classes within the amended area provide the context for the level of impact to visual resources.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Expanding the existing corridor along I-80 and designating a new corridor south of I-80 for a combined total of 92 miles would allow for additional potential future aboveground linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Of the amended area, 7,687 acres would be located within VRM Class II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the utility corridor would need to conform with the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands, including portions of the corridor that are located in sensitive viewpoints of the CDNST SRMA, the Rawlins to Baggs Road Historic Trail, and the Overland NHT. Siting utilities in multiple locations along I-80 and near Powder Rim in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

A 49-mile newly designated utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative D would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Alternative D crosses 8,840 acres managed with VRM Class II objectives, which accommodate only low levels of change to the landscape to retain the existing natural character and could not be reasonably mitigated to a level that would allow the large-scale aboveground utilities to meet VRM Class II objectives. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

Additionally, the proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP and classified as VRM Class II. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in impacts to the visual quality and aesthetic value of the area.

BLM Price Field Office

A 3-mile newly designated utility corridor in the Price FO would be located in an area with no existing transmission lines and would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Of the amended area, 794 acres would be located within VRM Class II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform to the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands. Siting utilities in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

4.5.12.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendment would have on visual resources in the respective area is discussed in the following section. The quantification of the acreage of VRM classes within the amended area provide the context for the level of impact to visual resources.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 19 miles of new utility corridor in the Vernal FO would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Of the amended area, 194 acres would be located within VRM Class II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform with VRM Class III objectives on public lands. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Two miles of a new utility corridor in the Salt Lake FO would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Of the amended area, 69 acres would be located within a VRM Class II area. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

4.5.12.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect these plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below. The quantification of the acreage of VRM classes within the amended area provide the context for the level of impact to visual resources.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 55 miles of new utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative F would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Alternative F crosses 9,980 acres managed with VRM Class II objectives, which accommodate only low levels of change to the landscape to retain the existing natural character and could not be reasonably mitigated to a level that would allow the large-scale aboveground utilities to meet VRM Class II objectives. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

Additionally, the proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP and classified as VRM Class II. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in impacts to the visual quality and aesthetic value of the area.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 6 miles of new utility corridor in the Salt Lake FO would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Of the amended area, 1,301 acres would be

located within VRM Class II areas. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

4.5.12.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.12.8 Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price alternative connectors would require plan amendments in the BLM Price FO. Less than 1 mile of a newly designated utility corridor in the Price FO would be located in an area with no existing transmission lines and would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform to the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands. Siting utilities in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

4.5.12.9 Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The quantification of the acreage of VRM classes within the amended area provide the context for the level of impact to visual resources.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 3 miles of new utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Of the amended area, 323 acres would be located within VRM Class II areas. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 5 miles of new utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated in the introduction to this resource. Of the amended area, 1,112 acres would be located within VRM Class II areas. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet current quality objectives after mitigation.

4.5.13 Recreation Resources

Plan amendments to grant a new or expand an existing transmission line utility corridor, convert an existing underground corridor to aboveground, and alter a ROW exclusion area to an avoidance area, could affect recreation settings and experiences through additional permitted development. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Altering the recreation setting would adversely affect visitors' recreation experiences and could lead to the displacement of some visitors to other areas or other parts of affected areas. Changing visitors' recreation experiences also may affect the recreation goals and objectives for certain areas as stated in the RMPs. Recreation impacts focus on SRMAs, ERMAs, and developed/undeveloped recreation sites.

Plan amendments to grant a new or expand an existing transmission line utility corridor could affect OHV recreation over time through concentrating additional permitted development that could affect the OHV-related goals and objectives near the corridors. Although ROWs sited within the corridors would likely lead to additional new access, new routes would be available for administrative use only and not for OHV recreation. OHV recreationists could be temporarily or permanently displaced due to the construction and location of the corridor, facilities, and access roads. OHV impacts focus on only OHV-related recreation. Increased access to maintain facilities in the utility corridors also could increase the potential for unauthorized OHV use.

Section 3.13, Recreation Resources, provides a detailed description of impacts to recreation resources within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.13.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on recreation in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The expanded utility corridor along I-80 overlaps with 26 acres of the CDNST; however, there are multiple utility and transportation facilities in the area. Expanding the utility corridor south of I-80 would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated public lands in the Western ERMA, which could displace some visitors.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to existing roads and vehicle routes within the checkerboard area; and the limited to designated roads and trails designation between the checkerboard area and the state line. In addition, the RMP OHV management goal and objectives would not be affected by the new utility corridor.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Providing a 36-mile new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands and recreation uses at Sevenmile Ridge/Sand Wash Basin, which could interfere with access used by visitors to recreate in the area including those interested in viewing wild horses within the Sand Wash Basin. The new utility corridor would not affect the ERMA objectives in the RMP, which include providing direction and destination signing, focusing public land boundary signing on fragmented lands, and using education to further enhance resource protection.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to existing roads and trails nor would the transportation and access and travel management goals and objectives be affected.

The new utility corridors for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 would not overlap with SRMAs or affect OHV recreation opportunities that exist in the area. Both micro-siting options would cross Deerlodge Road, which provides access to Dinosaur National Monument. The recreational and aesthetic setting for visitors accessing the Monument would be deteriorated where future utilities cross the road (see Section 3.13 for a detailed discussion on recreation impacts).

BLM Vernal Field Office

Providing a 28-mile new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the goals and objectives for recreational resources as stated in the RMP or management of undesignated lands for dispersed recreation (RMP Management Decision REC-4).

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails nor would the travel management of roads and trails goals and objectives be affected.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Providing a new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the unstructured types of recreation activities provided in the ERMA and the community-based dispersed, motorized recreation in the Utah Rims SRMA.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of open to ORV use.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Less than 1 mile of an amended area to allow for an exception through a ROW Exclusion Area would further alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation use that occurs in this area, which could displace some visitors. Expanding the corridor would affect the RMP recreation goal of providing quality settings for developed and undeveloped recreation experiences and opportunities while protecting resources.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the utility corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities would not be affected. In addition, the RMP Travel Management goals and objective would not be affected.

4.5.13.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on recreation in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The designation of 81 miles of a new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses. Impacts for the new utility corridor would be the same as for Alternative A.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Expanding and converting the 44-mile existing utility corridor to allow overhead utilities would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation use on undesignated BLM lands as additional projects are approved within the corridor. The new utility corridor would not affect ERMA management as described in the RMP, which states that the ERMA will be managed custodially to provide an unstructured recreational opportunity.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor would not be affected. Expansion and conversion of the utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to existing roads, ways, and trails on most of the public lands from October 1 through April 30; and the limited to designated roads, trails, and ways designation for the White River ACEC and an area south of Rangely. In addition, the RMP Motorized Vehicle Travel objective should not be affected by the new utility corridor.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Providing a new 7-mile utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the goals and objectives for recreational resources as stated in the RMP or management of undesignated lands for dispersed recreation (RMP Management Decision REC-4).

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails nor would the travel management of roads and trails goals and objectives be affected.

BLM Price Field Office

Providing a 19-mile new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands and recreation uses, which could displace some visitors. A new corridor would not substantially affect the management goal for the ERMA to provide opportunities for a wide variety of recreation experiences, activities, and benefits in a manner that protects visitor health and safety, resource protection, and seek to reduce conflicts between other land uses and other recreation user groups due to the size of the ERMA and the variety of experiences provided within the ERMA.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability of visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor would not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails. In addition, the RMP Recreation and OHV and the Transportation goals and objectives should not be affected by the new utility corridor.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.13.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on recreation in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The expanded utility corridor along I-80 overlaps with 26 acres of the CDNST and the expanded utility corridor along SH-789 is within the Western ERMA. Effects would be the same as described for Alternative A.

Expansion of the utility corridor would not affect the RMP OHV designation of limited to existing roads and vehicle routes within the checkerboard area; and the limited to designated roads and trails designation between the checkerboard area and the state line. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed for Alternative A.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 6-mile new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses. Effects would be the similar as described for Alternative A.

The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to existing roads and trails. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed for Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Providing a 17-mile new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands and recreation uses, which could displace some visitors. A new corridor would not substantially affect the management goal for the ERMA to provide opportunities for a wide variety of recreation experiences, activities, and benefits in a manner that protects visitor health and safety, resource protection, and seek to reduce conflicts between other land uses and other recreation user groups due to the size of the ERMA and the variety of experiences provided within the ERMA. However, 18 acres of the amended area would overlap with the San Rafael Swell SRMA, which is managed for the motorized and recreational opportunities within an expansive and unique geologic setting. While the transmission line would introduce a new structure within the expansive views of the San Rafael SRMA, the line would parallel I-70 and would not disrupt the motorized or recreational opportunities nor the geologic setting.

The new utility corridor would not affect the RMP OHV designation of limited to designated roads and trails. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed for Alternative B.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Allowing a 6-mile, one-time exception to add additional utilities to the existing corridor across the VRM Class II area would further alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation use that occurs in this area, which could displace some visitors. The amended area would overlap with 811 acres of the Chief Mountain SRMA, which is managed for a broad recreation opportunity spectrum ensuring a balance of recreation experiences. While the transmission line would introduce a new structure along the southern edge of the Chief Mountain SRMA, the recreation experience would be maintained since the transmission line would parallel existing overhead utilities.

4.5.13.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on recreation in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The expanded utility corridor along I-80 overlaps with 26 acres of the CDNST and the new utility corridor south of I-80 is within the Western ERMA. Effects would be the same as described for Alternative A.

Expansion of the utility corridor would not affect the RMP OHV designation of limited to existing roads and vehicle routes within the checkerboard area; and the limited to designated roads and trails

designation between the checkerboard area and the state line. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed for Alternative A.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Providing a new 49-mile utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the goals and objectives for recreational resources as stated in the RMP or management of undesignated lands for dispersed recreation (RMP Management Decision REC-4).

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. The change in tentative classification from scenic to recreational would allow for more potential access and shoreline developments in the Fourmile Bottom area of the Lower Green River. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in impacts to the natural and aesthetic value of the area and displace some users to other, less disturbed areas.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails nor would the

BLM Price Field Office

Providing a 3-mile new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands and recreation uses, which could displace some visitors. A new corridor would not substantially affect the management goal for the ERMA to provide opportunities for a wide variety of recreation experiences, activities, and benefits in a manner that protects visitor health and safety, resource protection, and seek to reduce conflicts between other land uses and other recreation user groups due to the size of the ERMA and the variety of experiences provided within the ERMA.

The new utility corridor would not affect the RMP OHV designation of limited to designated roads and trails. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed for Alternative B.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

4.5.13.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendment would have on recreation in the respective area is discussed in the following section.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Providing a new 19-mile utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the goals and objectives for recreational resources as stated in the RMP or management of undesignated lands for dispersed recreation (RMP Management Decision REC-4).

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails nor would the travel management of roads and trails goals and objectives be affected.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 2-mile utility corridor in the Salt Lake FO would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the unstructured types of recreation activities provided in the ERMA.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of open to ORV use.

4.5.13.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect these plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 55 miles of new utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative F would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the goals and objectives for recreational resources as stated in the RMP or management of undesignated lands for dispersed recreation (RMP Management Decision REC-4).

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. The change in tentative classification from scenic to recreational would allow for more potential access and shoreline developments in the Fourmile Bottom area of the Lower Green River. Concentrating utilities in these areas could result in impacts to the natural and aesthetic value of the area and displace some users to other, less disturbed areas.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails nor would the travel management of roads and trails goals and objectives be affected.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 6 miles of new utility corridor in the Salt Lake FO would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the unstructured types of recreation activities provided in the ERMA.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of open to ORV use.

4.5.13.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.13.8 Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price alternative connectors would require plan amendments in the Price FO. Providing less than 1 mile of a new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands and recreation uses, which could displace some visitors. A new corridor would not substantially affect the management goal for the ERMA to provide opportunities for a wide variety of recreation experiences, activities, and benefits in a manner that protects visitor health and safety, resource protection, and seek to reduce conflicts between other land uses and other recreation user groups due to the size of the ERMA and the variety of experiences provided within the ERMA.

The new utility corridor would not affect the RMP OHV designation of limited to designated roads and trails. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed under Alternative B.

4.5.13.9 Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 3 miles of new utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the goals and objectives for recreational resources as stated in the RMP or management of undesignated lands for dispersed recreation (RMP Management Decision REC-4).

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails nor would the travel management of roads and trails goals and objectives be affected.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 5 miles of new utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the unstructured types of recreation activities provided in the ERMA.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of open to OHV use.

4.5.14 Land Use

Section 3.14 provides a detailed description of impacts to land use within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections. This section is subdivided into lands and realty and livestock grazing.

4.5.14.1 Lands and Realty

Plan amendments granting a new or expanded utility corridor or changing an exclusion area to an avoidance area would change the allowed uses and associated consequences for lands and realty as they are managed pursuant to BLM RMPs and USFS LRMPs. In all instances, the plan amendments proposed would lessen the restrictions currently in place, which would permit more flexibility for the acquisition, disposal, withdrawal and use of public lands. The lands and realty management objectives were reviewed for the affected FOs where amendments are proposed. For some of the older RMPs

that do not include lands and realty goals or direction, land management, ROW and/or utility corridor objectives were reviewed instead.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on lands and realty in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The existing utility corridor proposed for expansion along I-80 currently contains one 115-kV transmission line. Additional high voltage transmission lines are proposed in the same corridor, as discussed in Chapter 5.0, Cumulative Impacts. There are currently no utilities located within the proposed 78 miles of newly designated corridor; however, other transmission projects are analyzing the route for potential siting. Expanding the existing utility corridor would allow for concentration of up to three additional future utilities to a common area; however, separation distances would restrict the amount of new utilities permitted within the corridor. Areas where a new aboveground utility corridor is established would permit up to five other utilities (power lines, communications, and renewable energy facilities) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. The proposed corridor would not conflict with the ROW exclusion areas identified in Section 2.17 of the RMP, Lands and Realty Management Actions. In addition, the plan amendment would not prevent land tenure adjustments identified within the RMP-designated retention and disposal zones.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Establishing a new 36-mile utility corridor to accommodate Alternative A would permit up to three other aboveground utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. The proposed corridor would not conflict with the ROW exclusion areas identified in Section 2.17 of the RMP, Lands and Realty Management Actions. In addition, the plan amendment would not prevent land tenure adjustments identified within the RMP-designated retention and disposal zones.

The new utility corridors for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 would have similar effects for this alternative.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Alternative A would cross 28 miles of public lands outside of designated WWEC and RMP-designated utility corridors. Utilities and utility corridors exist to the south and north of the new corridor; however, there are no utilities sited in the same location. A new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative A would permit other utilities (up to three additional electric transmission and distribution lines) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. The proposed utility corridor would not be located within ROW exclusion areas or ROW-avoidance areas, which are specifically identified in the Lands and Realty Management chapter of the RMP as being set aside for the protection of natural resources. A new utility corridor would not prevent the sale (disposal) of public lands.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The amended area for Alternative A includes two small parcels of public land managed under the Pony Express RMP. The eastern parcel is surrounded by state and USFS land and the western parcel is surrounded by private land. The portion of Alternative A that crosses BLM land is not located within a designated utility corridor; however, Alternative A does parallel an existing 345-kV transmission line. Providing a new utility corridor with a plan amendment to accommodate Alternative A could permit up to three other aboveground utilities (to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs

currently do not exist. The Pony Express RMP does not contain a Lands and Realty program; however, the Lands Program includes priorities for the disposal or exchange of public lands, primarily focused on the disposal of lands for agriculture, mineral development, community/public purposes, or for protection of resources (e.g., national forest, historic sites, military use). Since the proposed utility corridor does not fall within the category of “lands not available for ownership adjustment”, impacts to land management and real estate transactions would be minor.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Alternative A traverses the southeast corner of the FO. Since the exception through this area is less than 1 mile, the effects of an amended area would be inconsequential. The plan amendment would not prevent the acquisition, disposal, withdrawal and use of public lands pursuant to the lands and realty objectives of the RMP.

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on lands and realty in the respective resource management areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Effects to lands and realty as a result of expanding an existing corridor would be the same as described under Alternative A.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Expanding and converting 44 miles of the existing utility corridor to allow aboveground utilities would allow opportunities for up to four more utilities to be located in the corridor, depending on separation distance requirements. Any high voltage transmission lines would require measures for cathodic protection to minimize impacts to existing underground utilities. These plan amendments would not prevent the acquisition, disposal, withdrawal and use of public lands.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Establishing 7 miles of new utility corridor for the Alternative B route would permit other utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROW currently do not exist. The proposed utility corridor would not be located within ROW exclusion or avoidance areas, which are specifically identified in the Lands and Realty Management chapter of the RMP as being set aside for the protection of natural resources. A new utility corridor would not prevent the sale (disposal) of public lands.

BLM Price Field Office

Alternative B would traverse an area where no utilities currently exist. Establishing 19 miles of a new utility corridor would permit other up to four utilities (power lines, and communication sites) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. These plan amendments would be consistent with Land and Realty management decisions LAR-21, -25, and -26. LAR-21 requires that WSAs are utility corridor exclusion areas; Alternative B does not cross a WSA. LAR-25 and -26 list the avoidance and exclusion areas where new utility corridors cannot be located; none of those listed in the RMP are crossed by Alternative B. Plan amendments would not prevent the acquisition, disposal, withdrawal and use of public lands.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect plan amendments would have on lands and realty in the respective resource management areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The southern portion of Alternative C would be located in a designated utility corridor along SH-789, pursuant to the Rawlins RMP. Expanding 63 miles of the existing utility corridor along SH-789 would allow opportunities for up to three more utilities to be located in the corridor, depending on separation distance requirements. Alternative C would not be located within any exclusion areas designated in the Rawlins RMP, or within any WSAs or SD/MAs. Effects would be the same as described under Alternative A for lands and realty.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

A total of 6 miles of the northern portion of Alternative C would need to be amended to allow for overhead utilities. Effects of the amended area would be similar as for Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Alternative C would traverse an area where no utilities currently exist. Establishing 17 miles of a new utility corridor in this area would permit up to three other utilities (power lines, pipelines, and communication sites) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. These plan amendments would be consistent with Land and Realty management decisions LAR-21, -25, and -26. Effects would be the same as described under Alternative B for lands and realty.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Alternative C is north of Caliente and an existing utility corridor. Since the proposed amendment through this area is a 6-mile, one-time exception, there would be no effects or opportunities for other utilities (powerlines, pipelines, communication sites). The plan amendment would not prevent the acquisition, disposal, withdrawal and use of public lands pursuant to the lands and realty objectives of the RMP.

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect plan amendments would have on lands and realty in the respective resource management areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The existing 92-mile utility corridor proposed for expansion along I-80 currently contains a 115-kV transmission line and additional high voltage transmission lines are proposed in the same corridor.

There are currently no utilities located within the newly designated corridor; however, other transmission projects are analyzing the route for potential siting, as discussed in Chapter 5.0. Establishing a new utility corridor in this area would permit up to three other utilities (power lines) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. The proposed corridor would not conflict with the ROW exclusion areas identified in Section 2.17 of the RMP, Lands and Realty Management Actions. Effects would be the same as described under Alternative A for lands and realty.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Establishing 49 miles of new utility corridor for the Alternative D route would permit other utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROW currently do not exist. The proposed utility corridor would not be located within ROW exclusion or avoidance areas, which are specifically identified in the Lands and Realty Management chapter of the RMP as being set aside for the protection of natural resources. A new utility corridor would not prevent the sale (disposal) of public lands.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. These plan amendments would enable other utilities to site overhead facilities through this area.

BLM Price Field Office

Alternative D would traverse an area in the northern portion of the Price FO. Establishing 3 miles of a new utility corridor in this area would permit up to 3 other utilities (power lines, pipelines, and communication sites) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. These plan amendments would be consistent with Land and Realty management decisions LAR-21, -25, and -26. Effects would be the same as described under Alternative B for lands and realty.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect plan amendment would have on lands and realty in the respective resource management area is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Establishing 19 miles of new utility corridor for the Alternative E route would permit other utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROW currently do not exist. The proposed utility corridor would not be located within ROW exclusion or avoidance areas, which are specifically identified in the Lands and Realty Management chapter of the RMP as being set aside for the protection of natural resources. A new utility corridor would not prevent the sale (disposal) of public lands.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The new 2-mile utility corridor in the Salt Lake FO would cross isolated parcels of public land managed under the Pony Express RMP. Providing a new utility corridor with a plan amendment to accommodate Alternative F could permit aboveground utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist. The Pony Express RMP does not contain a Lands and Realty program;

however, the Lands Program includes priorities for the disposal or exchange of public lands, primarily focused on the disposal of lands for agriculture, mineral development, community/public purposes, or for protection of resources (e.g., national forest, historic sites, military use). Since the proposed utility corridor does not fall within the category of “lands not available for ownership adjustment,” impacts to land management and real estate transactions would be minor.

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect these plan amendments would have on lands and realty in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 55 miles of new utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative F would permit other utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROW currently do not exist. The proposed utility corridor would not be located within ROW exclusion or avoidance areas, which are specifically identified in the Lands and Realty Management chapter of the RMP as being set aside for the protection of natural resources. A new utility corridor would not prevent the sale (disposal) of public lands.

The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. These plan amendments would enable other utilities to site overhead facilities through this area.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The effects of designating 6 miles of new utility corridor in the Salt Lake FO would be similar to those discussed under Alternative E.

Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price alternative connectors would require plan amendments in the BLM Price Field Office for a distance of less than 1 mile each. The portion of these connectors that would need to be amended area co-located with transportation corridors. These plan amendments would be consistent with Land and Realty management decisions LAR-21, -25, and -26. Effects would be the same as described under Alternative B for lands and realty.

Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 3 miles of new utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would permit other utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROW currently do not exist. The proposed utility corridor would not be located within ROW exclusion or avoidance areas, which are specifically identified in the Lands and Realty Management chapter of the RMP as being set aside for the protection of natural resources. A new utility corridor would not prevent the sale (disposal) of public lands.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 5 miles of new utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would cross isolated parcels of public land managed under the Pony Express RMP. Providing a new utility corridor with a plan amendment to accommodate Alternative F could permit aboveground utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist. The Pony Express RMP does not contain a Lands and Realty program; however, the Lands Program includes priorities for the disposal or exchange of public lands, primarily focused on the disposal of lands for agriculture, mineral development, community/public purposes, or for protection of resources (e.g., national forest, historic sites, military use). Since the proposed utility corridor does not fall within the category of “lands not available for ownership adjustment,” impacts to land management and real estate transactions would be minor.

4.5.14.2 Livestock Grazing

There would be little or no impacts on livestock grazing from plan amendment decisions. Plan amendments to create new utility or expand existing corridors would influence the ability to locate utilities in areas. These actions in turn have direct impacts on livestock grazing, which are analyzed pursuant to NEPA as individual projects are proposed. Allowing for potential future utilities to be developed in areas where currently none exist could affect the management of livestock on public lands as projects are developed. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Short-term impacts would include vegetation removal and loss of AUMs during infrastructure construction; impacts to range improvements or the use of those range improvements such as fences, pipelines, troughs, reservoirs, corrals; generating construction and traffic-related dust; and an increased risk of animal/vehicle collisions from construction-related activities. Long-term impacts would include loss of AUMs from removal of vegetation with the existence of permanent facilities and an increased risk of animal/vehicle collisions from maintenance operations.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. No national forests require land use plan amendments under this alternative. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed in the introduction to this resource. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

The following allotments would be overlapped by the amended area:

Rawlins FO, WY 24,185 total acres overlapped –Cherokee Trail –Continental –Daley Ranch –East Powder Wash –Echo Springs –Lazy Y S Ranch –Mexican Graves –North Laclede –Pine Grove/Bolten –Powder Rim Rotation –Riner –Rotten Springs –Sand Creek –Sixteen Mile –South Barrel –South Laclede –South Wamsutter

Little Snake FO, CO 7,0479 total acres overlapped –Cedar Springs Draw –East Powder Wash –Grounds –Horse Draw –Nipple Peak –Powder Wash –Sand Wash –Shepherd Spring –Snake River

Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 3 21 total acres overlapped –Cedar Springs Draw –Disappointment

Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 4 358 total acres overlapped –Cedar Springs Draw –Disappointment

Vernal FO, UT 7,241 total acres overlapped –Ouray Road –Powder Wash –Snake John –Split Mountain –Twelve Mile –Walker Hollow

Salt Lake FO, UT 31 total acres overlapped –ISO Tract-Ludlow

Caliente FO, NV 90 total acres overlapped –Gourd Spring

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed in the introduction to this resource. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Rawlins FO, WY 25,010 total acres overlapped –Cherokee Trail –Continental –Daley Ranch –Echo Springs –Lazy Y S Ranch –Mexican Graves –North Laclede –Pine Grove/Bolten –Powder Rim Rotation –Riner –Rotten Springs –Sand Creek –Sixteen Mile –South Barrel –South Laclede –South Wamsutter

Little Snake FO, CO 7,079 total acres overlapped –Cedar Springs Draw –East Powder Wash –Grounds –Horse Draw –Nipple Peak –Powder Wash –Sand Wash –Sheepherder Spring –Snake River

White River FO, CO 7,769 total acres overlapped –Atchee Ridge Amp – Cathedral Bluffs –Douglas Creek –Evacuation Creek –Johnson/Trujillo –Twin Buttes –West Salt Common

Vernal FO, UT 1,305 total acres overlapped –Atchee Ridge Amp –Evacuation Creek

Price FO, UT 1,250 total acres overlapped –Buckmaster –Mathis Wash –Mounds –Mud Springs –Oviatt –South Olsen Lake –Stalker –Washboard

Caliente FO, NV 90 total acres overlapped –Gourd Spring

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed in the introduction to this resource. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Rawlins FO, WY 19,101 total acres overlapped –Baggs Subunit –Brimmer Pastures –Cherokee –Coal Bank Wash –Daley Ranch –Doty Mountain –East Muddy –Echo Springs –George Dew –Grieve Pasture –North Baggs –North Pine Butte –Pine Grove/Bolten –Riner –Sixteen Mile –South Muddy –South Pasture –South Pine Butte

Little Snake FO, CO 850 total acres overlapped –Chicken Sage –Four Mile –Lower Fortification

White River FO, CO 7,769 total acres overlapped –Atchee Ridge Amp –Cathedral Bluffs –Douglas Creek –Evacuation Creek –Johnson/Trujillo –Twin Buttes –West Salt Common

Vernal FO, UT 1,305 total acres overlapped –Atchee Ridge Amp –Evacuation Creek

Price FO, UT 2,234 total acres overlapped –Buckmaster –Chimney Rock Flat –Neva –Oil Dome –R.J. –Red Seeps –Summerville –Trail Springs

Caliente FO, NV 1,029 total acres overlapped –Bennett Spring –Caliente –Highway –Oak Springs –Peck

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed in the introduction to this resource. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Rawlins FO, WY 30,269 total acres overlapped –Big Robber –Big Robber Spreaders –Cherokee Trail –Cottonwood Hill –Daley Ranch –Doty Mountain –Echo Springs –Lazy Y S Ranch –Mexican Flats –Mexican Graves –North Laclede –Pine Grove/Bolten –Powder Rim Rotation –Red Creek –Riner –Sixteen Mile –South Flat Top –South Laclede –South Wamsutter

Little Snake FO, CO 7,079 total acres overlapped –Cedar Springs Draw –East Powder Wash –Grounds –Horse Draw –Nipple Peak –Powder Wash –Sand Wash –Sheepherder Spring –Snake River

Vernal FO, UT 13,003 total acres overlapped –Antelope Draw –Argyle Ridge –Artesia –Big Wash –Currant Canyon –Five Mile –Green River Amp –Green River Bottoms –Lears Canyon –Little Desert –Olsen Amp –Parleys Canyon –Powder Wash –Sand Wash –Seven Sifers –Snake John –Sulfur Canyon –Water Canyon #2 –White River Bottoms –Wildhorse Bench

Price FO, UT 687 total acres overlapped –Argyle Ridge –North Hollow –Sulfur Canyon

Caliente FO, NV 90 total acres overlapped –Gourd Spring

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed in the introduction to this resource. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Vernal FO, UT 3,089 total acres overlapped –Antelope Draw –Ouray Road –Powder Wash –Snake John –Twelve Mile –West Fork

Salt Lake FO, UT 150 total acres overlapped –ISO Tract-Ludlow –Kyune I –Price Canyon West

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed in the introduction to this resource. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Vernal FO, UT 14,142 total acres overlapped –Antelope Draw –Argyle Ridge –Artesia –Big Wash –Currant Canyon –Five Mile –Green River Amp –Green River Bottoms –Lears Canyon –Little Desert

–Olsen Amp –Parleys Canyon –Powder Wash –Sand Wash –Seven Sisters –Snake John –Sulfur Canyon –Water Canyon #1 –Water Canyon #2 –West Fork –White River Bottoms –Wildhorse Bench

Salt Lake FO, UT 1,269 total acres overlapped –Cherry Creek –ISO Tract-Ludlow –Kyune I –West Fork

Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price Alternative Connectors would require plan amendments for less than 1 mile each in the Price FO. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed in the introduction to this resource. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Castle Dale Alternative Connector 6 total acres overlapped –R.J.

Price Alternative Connector 97 total acres overlapped –Hiawatha

Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require a plan amendment involving the following BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed in the introduction to this resource. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Vernal FO, UT 323 total acres overlapped –West Fork

Salt Lake FO, UT 1,241 total acres overlapped –Kyune I –West Fork

4.5.15 Special Designation and Management Areas

Plan amendments to expand an existing or create a new transmission line utility corridor could affect management objectives for SD/MAs. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. While some of the proposed and alternative corridors currently include portions of WSAs or wilderness areas, utilities would not be allowed in these areas unless Congressional approval is provided. The ROW is adjacent to the following areas:

- Oil Spring Mountain WSA (BLM White River FO, Alternatives B and C)

The wilderness characteristics in these adjacent wilderness areas and WSAs may be temporarily diminished during construction of potential adjacent utility projects from noise associated with heavy machinery and increased traffic occurring near the wilderness area or WSA boundary. Visitors in adjacent wilderness areas or WSAs might notice a temporary disruption to solitude during construction. However, since all project construction would occur outside the wilderness area or WSA boundaries, no direct (permanent or physical) impacts to these areas are anticipated.

Section 3.15 provides a detailed description of impacts to SD/MAs within the corridors proposed. Plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.15.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. No SD/MAs would be affected by the plan amendments proposed in the following areas: BLM Little Snake FO, Salt Lake FO, and BLM Vernal FO. The proposed plan amendment that may affect SD/MAs is discussed in the following section.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 78-mile expanded utility corridor would overlap with 924 acres of the Red Rim-Daley WHMA which is a ROW avoidance area. Crossings of the CDNST and historic trails under study for national designation (Overland and Cherokee) would occur. Impacts anticipated from locating overhead transmission utilities through these SD/MAs would be similar to those discussed in Section 3.15, Special Designation Areas.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Alternative A through the Caliente FO would require a plan amendment for less than 1 mile. The amended area would overlap with 90 acres of the Mormon Mesa – Ely ACEC, which is managed as a ROW exclusion area. Impacts anticipated from locating overhead transmission utilities through the ACEC would be similar to those discussed in Section 3.15, Special Designation and Management Areas.

4.5.15.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. No SD/MAs would be affected by the plan amendments proposed in the following areas: BLM Little Snake FO, BLM Vernal FO, and BLM Price FO. The proposed plan amendments that may affect SD/MAs is discussed in the following section.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special designation areas from this 81 mile expanded utility corridor would be the same as described under Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

The utility corridor is situated within less than 1 acre of the Oil Spring Mountain ACEC, which is a ROW avoidance area. Project construction may use an existing road in the ACEC that forms the boundary with the WSA. Indirect impacts to 1 acre of the adjacent Oil Spring Mountain WSA from potential future construction within the utility corridor are discussed in the introduction to this resource.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.15.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. No SD/MAs would be affected by the plan amendments proposed in the following areas: BLM Little Snake FO, BLM Vernal FO, BLM Price FO, and BLM Caliente FO. The proposed plan amendment that may affect SD/MAs is discussed in the following section.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 63 mile expanded utility corridor would overlap with 924 acres of the Red Rim-Daley WHMA which is a ROW avoidance area and 827 acres of the Upper Muddy Creek/Grizzly ACEC. Crossings of the CDNST and historic trails under study for national designation (Overland and Cherokee) would

occur. Impacts anticipated from locating overhead transmission utilities through these SD/MAs would be similar to those discussed in Section 3.15, Special Designation and Management Areas.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

4.5.15.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. No SD/MAs would be affected by the plan amendments proposed in the Little Snake or Price FOs.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 92-mile utility corridor would overlap with 924 acres of the Red Rim-Daley WHMA which is a ROW avoidance area. Crossings of the CDNST and historic trails under study for national designation (Overland and Cherokee) would occur. Impacts anticipated from locating overhead transmission utilities through these SD/MAs would be similar to those discussed in Section 3.15, Special Designation and Management Areas.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The area proposed for amendment includes 41 acres of the Lower Green River Corridor ACEC. The area is managed as ROW avoidance area for protection of riparian and special status species habitat and scenic values. The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. The change in tentative classification from scenic to recreational would allow for more potential access and shoreline developments in the Fourmile Bottom area of the Lower Green River. Concentrating utilities in these areas would result in impacts to the natural and aesthetic value of portions of the ACEC and WSR in the area that are within the viewshed of the corridor crossing of the Green River.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

4.5.15.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. No SD/MAs would be affected by the plan amendments proposed in this area.

4.5.15.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect these plan amendments would have on special designations in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The area proposed for amendment includes 41 acres of the Lower Green River Corridor ACEC. The area is managed as ROW avoidance area for protection of riparian and special status species habitat and scenic values. The proposed plan amendments for the utility exemption through the Lower Green River ACEC and change in WSR status to “recreational” would cross less than 1 mile of the Lower Green River where there is an existing utility corridor designated through the Vernal RMP. The change in tentative classification from scenic to recreational would allow for more potential access and shoreline developments in the Fourmile Bottom area of the Lower Green River. Concentrating utilities

in these areas could result in impacts to the natural and aesthetic value of portions of the ACEC and WSR in the area that are within the viewshed of the corridor crossing of the Green River.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 6 miles of new utility corridor in the Salt Lake FO would not affect SD/MAs.

4.5.15.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.15.8 Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price alternative connectors would require plan amendments for less than 1 mile each of the utility corridor in the Price FO. No SD/MAs would be affected by either of these connectors.

4.5.15.9 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the Vernal and Salt Lake FOs. The new utility corridors for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would not affect SD/MAs in either of these FOs.

4.5.16 Transportation and Access

In general, a plan amendment creating a new utility corridor would allow for potential future developments that require new road construction and road upgrades to provide access to utility system alignments, staging areas, and related facilities. The new roads would extend from the existing roadway network into areas previously without roads. The road upgrades would increase safety and/or capacity of the existing roads and change maintenance needs and long-term requirements. The new roads and the existing roads would be used by utility construction, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning vehicles during the life cycle of each utility installation. Some new roads would remain in place for maintenance and could be added to the road inventory for the administering agency depending on identified needs. No conflicts with airports or air travel would be expected, except where the new corridors would be located within military operation areas.

Impacts from the proposed plan amendments on the transportation system would be similar to those anticipated from locating overhead transmission utilities as discussed in Section 3.16, which provides a detailed description of impacts to transportation and access within the corridors proposed. However, once an access network is established, minimal access road improvements would be needed for subsequent projects in the same corridor. While locations of the corridors vary by alternative, anticipated impacts would be similar for all alternatives.

4.5.17 Social and Economic Conditions

There would be little or no impacts on socioeconomics from plan amendment decisions. Plan amendments to create new utility or expand existing corridors would influence the ability to locate utilities in areas. These actions in turn have direct impacts on socioeconomics, which are analyzed pursuant to NEPA as individual projects are proposed. Designation of utility corridors would facilitate processing of ROW applications; however, these projects would be proposed whether or not a corridor was designated. Indirect effects to other revenue sources, such as recreation, hunting, and livestock operations, could occur in localized areas if users are displaced as a result of concentrated ROW development.

Impacts from the proposed plan amendments on the transportation system would be similar to those anticipated from locating overhead transmission utilities as discussed in Section 3.17, which provides a detailed description of impacts to social and economic conditions within the corridors proposed. While locations of the corridors vary by alternative, anticipated impacts would be similar for all alternatives.

4.5.18 Public Health and Safety

There would be little or no impacts on public health and safety from plan amendment decisions. Plan amendments to create new utility or expand existing corridors would influence the ability to locate utilities in areas. These actions in turn have direct impacts on public health and safety, which are analyzed pursuant to NEPA as individual projects are proposed. Anticipated public health and safety risks from proposed utility projects would include worker accidents, fire, electrocution, exposure to hazardous materials, exposure to electric fields and EMFs, communication disturbances caused by corona, impacts from stray and induced voltage, and noise. Potential risks from the future proposed utilities in the corridors would be considered minor because previously established requirements for utilities and utility corridors would be expected to remain in place, would be modified as needed if new risks were identified, and the requirements would continue to effectively avoid, minimize and mitigate anticipated public health and safety risks.

Impacts from the proposed plan amendments on the transportation system would be similar to those anticipated from locating overhead transmission utilities as discussed in Section 3.18, which provides a detailed description of public health and safety impacts to resources within the corridors proposed. While locations of the corridors vary by alternative, anticipated impacts would be similar for all alternatives.

4.5.19 Wild Horses Management Areas

Allowing for potential future development of utilities in areas where currently none exist could affect the management of wild horses and burros on public lands. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Effects to wild horses and burros consist of temporary and permanent displacement of vegetation due to construction of infrastructure, interference with access to water sources, and overall disturbance due to construction noise and human presence (usually only an issue during foaling season). Depending on the location of the overhead power lines, overhead utilities may restrict helicopter use needed to gather excess wild horses in areas where wild horses occupy the landscape. Impacts anticipated from locating overhead transmission utilities through these WHMAs would be similar to those discussed in Section 3.19, Wild Horse Management Areas.

4.5.19.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on wild horses and burros in the respective FO is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The new utility corridor traverses the Adobe Town HMA. Wild horses may experience increased stress from human presence and noise, and viewers could be displaced. If the location is critical to BLM's ability to gather wild horses, overhead utilities in the corridor could affect BLM's ability to effectively manage horses. Forage within 2,908 acres (<1 percent) of the HMA could be affected as projects are approved within the corridor.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The new utility corridor traverses adjacent to the eastern portion of the Sand Wash HMA and would be located directly over a County Road 75, which is a primary route for public wild horse viewing. Wild horses may experience increased stress from human presence and noise, and viewers could be displaced. If the location of the corridor is critical to BLM's ability to gather wild horses, overhead utilities in the corridor could affect BLM's ability to effectively manage wild horses.

The new utility corridors for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 would not affect HMAs.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The Bonanza HA is located south of the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to HAs from proposed plan amendments in this FO.

BLM Caliente Field Office

No HMAs would be intersected by the area amended; therefore, there would be no effects to HMAs from proposed plan amendments in this FO.

4.5.19.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on wild horses and burros in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The Adobe Town HMA is located within the corridor; therefore, impacts would be the same as described in Alternative A.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

The utility corridor intersects the Piceance/East Douglas HMA as well as the North Piceance and West Douglas herd areas, which could be affected during construction by the loss of vegetation and cover until reclamation is successful. Forage within 381 acres (0.2 percent) of the Piceance/East Douglas HMA, within 2,631 (3 percent) of the North Piceance herd area, and within 2,778 (2 percent) of the West Douglas herd areas could be affected as projects are approved within the corridor.

Wild horses may experience increased stress from human presence and noise. If the location of the corridor is critical to BLM's ability to gather wild horses, overhead utilities in the corridor could affect BLM's ability to effectively manage wild horses.

BLM Vernal Field Office

No HAs would be intersected by the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to wild horses from plan amendments proposed in this FO.

BLM Price Field Office

No HMAs would be intersected by the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to wild horses from plan amendments proposed in this FO.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.19.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on wild horses and burros in the respective BLM offices is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The Adobe Town HMA is located west of the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to HMAs from proposed plan amendments in this FO.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

No HMAs would be intersected by the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to wild horses from proposed plan amendments in this FO.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

No HMAs would be intersected by the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to wild horses from proposed plan amendments in this FO.

BLM Caliente Field Office

No HMAs would be intersected by the amended area; therefore, there would be no effects to wild horses from proposed plan amendments in this FO.

4.5.19.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on wild horses and burros in the respective BLM offices is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The new utility corridor traverses a small portion of the Adobe Town HMA. Wild horses may experience increased stress from human presence and noise, and viewers could be displaced. If the location is critical to BLM's ability to gather wild horses, overhead utilities in the corridor could affect BLM's ability to effectively manage horses by restricting helicopter use.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The Hill Creek HA is located approximately 17 miles east of the area proposed for amendment. Therefore, no effects to HAs from the proposed plan amendment are anticipated in this FO.

BLM Price Field Office

No HMAs would be intersected by the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to wild horses from proposed plan amendments in this FO.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

4.5.19.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. No HMAs would be intersected by the amended areas in either FO; therefore, there would be no impacts to wild horses from plan amendments proposed in these FOs.

4.5.19.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendment would have on wild horses and burros in the respective BLM office is discussed below. No HMAs or HAs would be intersected by the amended areas in either FO; therefore, there would be no effects to wild horses from proposed plan amendments in these FOs. The Hill Creek HA in the Vernal FO is located approximately 17 miles east of the area proposed for amendment.

4.5.19.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.19.8 Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price alternative connectors would require plan amendments for less than 1 mile of the utility corridor in the Price FO. The Castle Dale and Price connectors would not cross any HMAs or HAs; therefore, there would be no impacts to wild horses from plan amendments proposed for this FO.

4.5.19.9 Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require a plan amendment in the BLM Vernal and Salt Lake Office. No HMAs or HAs would be intersected by the corridor in either FO; therefore, there would be no effects to from this alternative variation.

4.5.20 Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Establishing utility corridors in areas containing inventory units that are determined to meet criteria for lands with wilderness characteristics could lead to potential future development of utilities that could affect wilderness units and eliminate portions or the entirety of the unit from meeting wilderness criteria. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Impacts could either result from the loss of wilderness characteristics in areas that the BLM has administratively made a decision to protect or negate the eligibility of the whole inventoried area for consideration in a future planning effort for wilderness character protection.

4.5.20.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. The following amendments would not overlap with lands with wilderness characteristics: BLM Rawlins FO, BLM Vernal FO, BLM Salt Lake FO, and BLM Caliente

FO. Proposed plan amendments in the BLM Little Snake FO that could affect lands with wilderness characteristics are discussed below.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Seven lands with wilderness characteristic units would be affected by the proposed plan amendment: CON-010-022 – Spence Gulch, CON-010-023 – Upper Little Snake, CON-010-029 – West Sevenmile, CON-010-031 – Lower Little Snake, CON-010-033 – Deep Canyon, CON-010-034 – Simsberry Draw, and CON-010-046 – Anthill Draw. Future development of utilities in this corridor could impact size, solitude, and naturalness of these units, thereby affecting the ability of part or the entirety of these units to meet wilderness criteria.

The new utility corridors for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 would not affect lands with wilderness characteristic units.

4.5.20.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments for six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The following amendments would not overlap with lands with wilderness characteristics: BLM Rawlins FO, BLM Vernal FO, and BLM Caliente FO. Proposed plan amendments that could affect lands with wilderness characteristics are discussed below.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Three lands with wilderness characteristic units (CO-110-007 – Bluejay Creek, CO-110-021 – Coal Ridge, CO-110-025 – Lower Wolf Creek) would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Future development of utilities in this corridor could impact size, solitude, and naturalness of these units, thereby affecting the ability of part or the entirety of these units to meet wilderness criteria.

BLM Price Field Office

Two lands with wilderness characteristic units (Price River and Never Sweat Wash) would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Future development of utilities in this corridor could impact size, solitude, and naturalness of these units, thereby affecting the ability of part or the entirety of these units to meet wilderness criteria.

4.5.20.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments for six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The following amendments would not overlap with lands with wilderness characteristics: BLM Rawlins FO, BLM Little Snake FO, BLM Vernal FO, and BLM Caliente FO. Proposed plan amendments that could affect lands with wilderness characteristics are discussed below.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Two lands with wilderness characteristic units (Lost Springs Wash and Never Sweat Wash), which are not managed for wilderness character as determined through the RMP, would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Future development of utilities in this corridor could impact size, solitude,

and naturalness of these units, thereby affecting the ability of part or the entirety of these units to meet wilderness criteria.

4.5.20.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments for five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The following amendments would not overlap with lands with wilderness characteristics: BLM Rawlins FO, BLM Price FO, and BLM Caliente FO. Proposed plan amendments that could affect lands with wilderness characteristics are discussed below.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Two lands with wilderness characteristic units (Currant Canyon and Desolation Canyon) would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Future development of utilities in this corridor could impact size, solitude, and naturalness of these units, thereby affecting the ability of part or the entirety of these units to meet wilderness criteria.

4.5.20.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments for two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The amended areas in these FOs would not affect lands with wilderness characteristics.

4.5.20.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments for two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed plan amendments for the BLM Salt Lake FO would not overlap with lands with wilderness characteristics. Proposed plan amendments that could affect lands with wilderness characteristics in the BLM Vernal FO are discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Two lands with wilderness characteristic units (Currant Canyon and Desolation Canyon) would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Future development of utilities in this corridor could impact size, solitude, and naturalness of these units, thereby affecting the ability of part or the entirety of these units to meet wilderness criteria.

4.5.20.7 Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

4.5.20.8 Alternative Connectors

The Castle Dale and Price alternative connectors would require plan amendments for less than 1 mile of the utility corridor in the Price FO. No lands with wilderness characteristic units would be affected by the proposed plan amendment.

4.5.20.9 Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require a plan amendment for the BLM Vernal and Salt Lake FOs. No lands with wilderness characteristic units would be affected by the proposed plan amendments.

4.5.21 Fire and Fuels Management

Allowing for potential future utilities to be developed in areas where currently none exist could affect the management of fire and fuels. In addition, the expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Benefits to fire and fuel management would include decreased fuel loads due to ROW clearing and maintenance, resulting in the potential for reduced fire size and intensity. The addition of access roads also could facilitate firefighting efforts. The inclusion of a utility corridor could eliminate the ability to use wildland fire or prescribed fire for beneficial vegetation treatment and may increase the frequency of fire events due to additional human presence, vehicles, and equipment (ignition sources). The location of infrastructure would elevate the need to suppress fire in the utility corridor with this additional value at risk to wildland fire. If an RMP or LRMP does not state otherwise, it is assumed that suppression of wildland fire would be prioritized to protect human life and property, including infrastructure. .

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Salt Lake, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on fire and fuels management in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The location of an aboveground transmission line in this area could have an effect on fire and fuels management because the area has been designated as suitable for the use of wildland fire as a resource benefit used to protect, maintain, and enhance vegetation resources and to allow fire to function in its natural ecological role. There would need to be an increased emphasis on fire suppression and post-fire restoration in the corridor area to protect the infrastructure and maintain public health and safety.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

As a whole, the Little Snake FO integrates wildland fire into the ecosystem as a natural process on a landscape scale. Development in a new utility corridor where currently no development exists could have an effect on fire and fuels management. Along the Alternative A route, a suppression response from fire management units to wildland fire may be necessary to prevent damage to the infrastructure and risks to public health and safety taking into consideration firefighter safety. This area would be precluded from the use of wildland fire as a vegetation treatment; however, the vegetation clearing and maintenance practices along the corridor may serve a similar role.

The new utility corridors for Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options 3 and 4 would have similar effects described for this alternative.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Prescribed and wildland fire is used within the FO as a method for reintroducing natural fire regimes to fire-adapt ecosystems; however, in the eastern portion of the FO, where Alternative A crosses public land, is a high fire risk area where fire is not desired. Introducing additional structures in this area may increase the potential for wildfire and associated suppression efforts required to control any fire starts. Any future transmission lines would need to meet design requirements to reduce the chances of fire in this high fire risk area.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Overall, wildland fire within the field office is suppressed when it occurs on public land. Therefore, Alternative A may not constitute an area where additional suppression efforts would be required.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Within the Caliente FO, fire is being reintroduced as a natural component of the ecosystem. Less than 1 mile of area proposed for amendment would equate to an incremental increased level of fire suppression which could lead to a greater accumulation of fuel biomass.

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on fire and fuels management in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The location of an aboveground transmission line in this area could have an effect on fire and fuels management because the area has been designated as suitable for the use of wildland fire as a resource benefit used to protect, maintain, and enhance vegetation resources and to allow fire to function in its natural ecological role. There would need to be an increased emphasis on fire suppression and post-fire restoration in the corridor area to protect the infrastructure and maintain public health and safety.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Wildland fire is used by the White River FO as a method for protecting, maintaining, and enhancing vegetation communities. Conversion and expansion of the existing utility corridor could have an effect on fire and fuels management within the FO. The corridor would constitute an area where additional fire suppression may be required to protect the infrastructure providing for public health and safety. Vegetation clearing and maintenance practices along the corridor may serve a similar role to fire in reducing fuel biomass.

BLM Vernal Field Office

In the eastern portion of the FO where Alternative B crosses public land, is a high fire risk area where fire is not desired. Therefore, Alternative B may not constitute an area where additional suppression efforts would be required.

BLM Price Field Office

Within the Price FO, wildland fire is the preferred method of vegetation treatment because it is considered to be less intrusive. Portions of Alternative B that extend outside of the utility corridor designated in the RMP equate to areas where wildland fire use would be precluded. In the absence of fire, mechanical, chemical, and biological methods are employed for vegetation treatments. The vegetation clearing and maintenance practices along the corridor would serve a similar role in reducing fuel loads.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving six BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on fire and fuels management in the respective BLM offices is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The Alternative C route has been designated as suitable for the use of wildland fire as a resource benefit used to protect, maintain, and enhance vegetation resources and to allow fire to function in its natural ecological role. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

As a whole, the Little Snake FO integrates wildland fire into the ecosystem as a natural process on a landscape scale. Effects to fire and fuels management from the newly designated corridor would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

BLM White River Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Portions of Alternative C that extend outside of the utility corridor designated in the RMP equate to areas where wildland fire use would be precluded. Effects to fire and fuels management as a result of expanding the existing utility corridor would be the same as for Alternative B described above.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Within the Caliente FO, fire is being reintroduced as a natural component of the ecosystem. A one-time exception through the VRM Class II area would equate to an increased level of fire suppression, particularly in high elevation areas where there tends to be a greater accumulation of fuel biomass.

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving five BLM FOs—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, Price, and Caliente. The effect these plan amendments would have on fire and fuels management in the respective BLM offices is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The Alternative D route has been designated as suitable for the use of wildland fire as a resource benefit used to protect, maintain, and enhance vegetation resources and to allow fire to function in its natural ecological role. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The proposed amendments and associated impacts would be the same as Alternative A.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Areas crossed by Alternative D are classified as areas where wildland fire is desired but there are significant constraints. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as described under Alternative A above.

BLM Price Field Office

Within the Price FO, wildland fire is the preferred method of vegetation treatment because it is considered to be less intrusive. Portions of Alternative D that extend outside of the utility corridor

designated in the RMP equate to areas where wildland fire use would be precluded. In the absence of fire, mechanical, chemical, and biological methods are employed for vegetation treatments. The vegetation clearing and maintenance practices along the corridor would serve a similar role in reducing fuel loads.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The proposed amendment and associated impacts would be the same as Alternatives A and B.

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect this plan amendment would have on fire and fuels management in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Areas crossed by Alternative E are classified as areas where fire is not desired at all. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as described under Alternative A.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Overall, wildland fire within the FO is suppressed when it occurs on public land. Therefore, Alternative E may not constitute an area where additional suppression efforts would be required.

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on the fire and fuels management in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Areas crossed by Alternative F are classified as areas where wildland fire is desired but there are significant constraints. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as described under Alternative A.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Overall, wildfire fire within the FO is suppressed when it occurs on public land. Therefore, Alternative F may not constitute an area where additional suppression efforts would be required.

Alternative G

The Alternative G route would require plan amendments involving two BLM FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed amendments and associated impacts for both of these FOs would be the same as Alternative A.

Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require a plan amendment in the Price FO. The less than 1 mile of utility corridor for the Castle Dale and Price connectors that extend outside of the utility corridor designated in the RMP equate to areas where wildland fire use would be precluded. In the absence of fire, mechanical, chemical, and biological methods are employed for vegetation treatments. The vegetation clearing and maintenance practices along the corridor would serve a similar role in reducing fuel loads.

Alternative Variations

The Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Vernal and Salt Lake. Impacts to fire and fuels in these areas are discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Areas crossed by Alternative the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation are classified as areas where wildland fire is desired but there are significant constraints. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as described under Alternative A.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office

The 6 miles of utility corridor for the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation that would require a plan amendment would be located in an area of existing fire suppression. Therefore, the Reservation Ridge Alternative Variation may not constitute an area where additional suppression efforts would be required.